

‘ALĪ: THE BEST OF
THE ṢAḤĀBAH
Explicit Testimonies
of *Ṣaḥīḥ* Sunnī *Aḥādīth*

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *ṣalamātullāh wa salāmuhu ‘alaihi*, who is my *maulā* and the *maulā* of all believers.

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PREFACE

The question of who the best of the Ṣaḥābah, *raḍiyallāh ‘anhum*, was has always been a thorny issue within the Ummah, especially among the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah. Even the Ṣaḥābah disputed with one another over the topic. Specifically, the debate often revolves around Abū Bakr and ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, only. It is very difficult to see anyone – whether Sunnī or Shī’ī – arguing that ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr or some other Ṣaḥābī – was the best of the Ṣaḥābah. Rather, the exact point of contention is, and always was: was Abū Bakr their best or ‘Alī? Expectedly, most of the Ahl al-Sunnah consider Abū Bakr to have been the best of the Ṣaḥābah, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, and then ‘Alī. By contrast, the Shī’ah believe that Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī was the best, then al-Ḥasan, then al-Ḥusayn, and then Sayyidah Fāṭimah, *‘alaihim al-salām*. There is a minority among Sunnīs – including some Ṣaḥābah and a lot of Ṣūfīs – who share the Shī’ī view on the matter.

Ordinarily, the debate over who was the best should have been a mere, healthy academic exercise. However, it is linked with *Imamah* and *khilāfah* in the Ummah. So, it is a very big issue, and provokes the deepest emotions of some people. In fact, countless Shī’īs and others have been murdered for more than a millenium by Sunnī extremists, only for their belief in the superiority of ‘Alī. The best of the Ummah at each point in time is the only one qualified for the *khilāfah*. This is the Command of Allāh and His Messenger, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alīhi*. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) confirms:

ففي هذا الخبر إخبار عمر بين المهاجرين والأنصار أن أبا بكر سيد المسلمين
وخيرهم وأحبهم إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ذلك علة مبايعته فقال بل
نبايعك أنت فأنت سيدنا وخيرنا وأحبنا إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
ليبين بذلك أن المأمور به تولية الأفضل وأنت أفضلنا فنبايعك

In this report is the declaration of ‘Umar among the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār that Abū Bakr was the *sayyid* of the Muslims and the best of them, and the most beloved of them to the Messenger of Allāh. This is the reason for following him. So, he (‘Umar) said, “Rather, we will follow you because you are our *sayyid*, and the best of us, and the most beloved of us to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him”. He wanted to make clear through it that: **WHAT IS ORDAINED IS**

TO GIVE AUTHORITY TO THE BEST, and you are the best of us. So, we will follow you.¹

The bottomline here is that *khilāfah* by anyone who is not the best of his time is contrary to the Order of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger, and is therefore both illegal and a *bid’ah*. That makes the *khilāfah* himself and all his supporters ringleaders of a *bid’ah*, as long as they are aware of his deficiency and still uphold his *khilāfah*. In that way, they would be guilty of creating a new provision in the religion to supplant that of Allāh. The grave danger of all this is captured perfectly in these words of the Messenger of Allāh, documented by Imām al-Nasāī (d. 303 H):

شر الأمور محدثاتها وكل محدثة بدعة وكل بدعة ضلالة وكل ضلالة في النار

The worst of the (religious) affairs are their innovations, and every innovation is a *bid’ah*, **and every *bid’ah* is misguidance, and every misguidance ends to the Fire.**²

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) comments:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*³

The Command of Allāh and His Messenger is that the best of the Ummah should *always* be their *khilāfah*, as testified by ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Meanwhile, the innovation in this matter is to make or allow *any* inferior individual as the *khilāfah*. This innovation is a *bid’ah*, and will land whosoever leads, practices or recognizes it in Hellfire. It is understandable then why some of our Sunnī brothers are so hell-bent upon emphasizing the superiority over Abū Bakr over the whole Ummah, followed by ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān, by all means – even to the extent of committing massacres. The survival of their *madhhab* depends very heavily on it. Should Abū Bakr, ‘Umar or ‘Uthmān fall, Sunnīsm itself ceases to exist as a valid entity!

¹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muassasat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 8, p. 565

² Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad b. Shu’ayb al-Nasāī, *al-Mujtabā min al-Sunan* (Ḥalab: Maktab Maṭbū’āt al-Islāmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 3, p. 188, # 1578

³ *Ibid*

So, certain drastic steps were taken to address the challenge. First, a very wide re-definition was issued for Shī'ism. This, apparently, was to scare Sunnīs away from researching into the issue. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852 H) takes the podium:

والتشيع محبة على وتقديمه على الصحابة فمن قدمه على أبي بكر وعمر فهو غال في
تشيعه ويطلق عليه رافضي ولا فشييعي فإن انضاف إلى ذلك السب أو التصريح
بالبغض فغال في الرفض وإن اعتقد الرجعة إلى الدنيا فأشد في الغلو

Shī'ism is love of 'Alī and the placing of him over the Ṣaḥābah (except Abū Bakr and 'Umar only). Whoever places him above Abū Bakr and 'Umar, such is an extremist in his Shī'ism, and he is called a Rāfiḍī. If he does not (place 'Alī over the two), then he is only a Shī'ī. If he added to that (i.e. preference of 'Alī over Abū Bakr and 'Umar) abuse, cursing or open hatred (of Abū Bakr and 'Umar), he is then an extremist in *Raḥḍ*. If he believes in *Raj'ah* into this world, then he is severe in (Rāfiḍī) extremism.⁴

Therefore, a Sunnī is only someone who considers 'Alī as inferior to Abū Bakr, 'Umar AND 'Uthmān. Whosoever places him above 'Uthmān is a Shī'ī, and whosoever views him as superior to Abū Bakr or 'Umar is a Rāfiḍī. In the Sunnī creed, being a Shī'ī is a *bid'ah*. Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) says:

أن البدعة على ضربين: فبدعة صغرى كغلو التشيع، أو كالتشيع بلا غلو ولا تحرف،
فهذا كثير في التابعين وتابعيهم مع الدين والورع والصدق. فلو رد حديث هؤلاء
لذهب جملة من الآثار النبوية، وهذه مفسدة بينة. ثم بدعة كبرى، كالرفض الكامل
والغلو فيه

Bid'ah has two types:

The minor *bid'ah*: like extreme Shī'ism, or like moderate Shī'ism, for this was widespread among the Tābi'īn and their followers, despite their devotion, piety and truthfulness. If the *aḥādīth* of these people were rejected, part of teachings of the Prophet would be lost, and that would be a clear evil.

⁴ Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī al-Shāfi'ī, *Hadī al-Sārī Muqaddimah Faṭḥ al-Bārī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1408 H), p. 460

Then **the major *bid’ah*: like complete *rafiḍ*** and extremism in it.⁵

By classifying the placing of ‘Alī above ‘Uthmān as a *bid’ah* – which leads to Hellfire – the classical Sunnī *‘ulamā* hoped to put a firm lid on all threats to their *madhhab*. However, their action has produced some horrible unintended consequences. Many of the Ṣaḥābah were *Raḥafīḍ* by Sunnī definition, and therefore heretics who will burn forever in the Fire! Imām Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463 H) identifies some of these Rāfiḍī Ṣaḥābah:

وروى عن سلمان وأبي ذر والمقداد وخباب وجابر وأبي سعيد الخدري وزيد بن الأرقم أن علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه أول من أسلم وفضله هؤلاء على غيره

Salmān, Abū Dharr, al-Miqdād, Khabāb, Jābir, Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī and Zayd b. Arqam narrated that ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, was the first to accept Islām, **and they considered him the most superior (among the Ṣaḥābah).**⁶

These senior Ṣaḥābah considered ‘Alī as superior to Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān! By Sunnī standards, their *bid’ah*, therefore, was of the *major* type! They were complete Rāfiḍīs. Another well-known Ṣaḥābī like them was Abū al-Ṭufayl, *raḍiyallāh ‘anhu*. Imām al-Dhahabī states about him:

واسم أبي الطفيل، عامر بن واثلة بن عبد الله بن عمرو الليثي الكنايني الحجازي الشيعي. كان من شيعة الإمام علي.

The name of Abū al-Ṭufayl was ‘Āmir b. Wāthilah b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Amr al-Laythī al-Kanānī al-Ḥijāzī, **the Shī’ī. He was from the Shī’ah of Imām ‘Alī.**⁷

Imām Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr adds:

⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Miẓān al-I’tidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah; 1st edition, 1382 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 1, pp. 5-6, # 2

⁶ Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr b. ‘Āṣim al-Nimrī al-Qurṭubī, *al-Istī’āb fī Ma’rifat al-Aṣḥāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl; 1st edition, 1412 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 3, pp. 1090, # 1855

⁷ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālāh; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ, Muhammad Na’īm al-‘Arqisūsī and Māmūn Ṣāghhirī], vol. 3, p. 468, # 97

وكان متشيعا في علي وفضلته ويثني على الشيخين أبي بكر وعمر ويترحم على
عثمان

He was a Shī'ī of 'Alī and considered him the most superior. He used to extol the two Shaykhs, Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and would ask for Allāh's mercy upon 'Uthmān.⁸

Al-Ḥāfiẓ explains the words of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr above:

قال أبو عمر كان يعترف بفضل أبي بكر وعمر لكنه يقدم عليا

Abū 'Umar said: He accepted the merit of Abū Bakr and 'Umar **but he considered 'Alī to be the most superior.**⁹

This creates an impossible dilemma for Sunnī Islām. If Sunnīs stick with their view that Shī'ism – as defined by them – is a *bid'ah*, then they must agree that all these fine Ṣaḥābah were heretics with no hope of salvation in the Hereafter. By contrast, if they free the Shī'ī Ṣaḥābah, then they must equally free all other Shī'ah and Rawāfiḍ! What is good for the goose is equally good for the gander. Besides, the Ṣaḥābah, who met the Prophet, are in an even more accountable position on any Islāmic matter than all the generations after them. It gets scary when one considers the possibility that the Messenger of Allāh could have been of the same opinion as the Shī'ī Ṣaḥābah! If he did, then it would have been Sunnah to place 'Alī over Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān. In that case, the majority view of the Ahl al-Sunnah on the matter would have been a *bid'ah* - in fact, a compounded *bid'ah*.

The other step taken by the Sunnī 'ulamā was to confuse their followers on the status and meanings of explicit *aḥādīth* indicating the overall superiority of Amīr al-Mūminīn 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib over all Ṣaḥābah. The most guilty individual in this regard was none other than "Shaykh al-Islām" Ibn Taymiyyah. Others, such as Imām al-Mubārakfūrī (d. 1282 H), 'Allāmah al-

⁸ Abū 'Umar Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Barr b. 'Āṣim al-Nimrī al-Qurṭubī, *al-Istī'āb fi Ma'rifa al-Aṣḥāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Jil; 1st edition, 1412 H) [annotator: 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 4, p. 1697, # 3054

⁹ Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣābah fi Tamyiz al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1415 H) [annotators: Shaykh 'Ādil Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Mawjūd and Shaykh 'Alī Muḥammad Ma'ūḍ], vol. 7, p. 193, # 10166

Albānī, Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ and others, have also followed his steps, albeit at a much lower level. In this book, we will be examining some of such *aḥādīth*, proving their authenticity absolutely, and analyzing their texts in the light of the Qur’ān and *mutawātir* Sunnah. Our *manhaj* in this regard is open, transparent, mathematical and precise. For instance, we have relied very heavily upon the verdicts concerning the individual narrators by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Asqalānī in his legendary reference work, *al-Taqrīb*. The reasons for this approach are two. First, al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, often fondly referred to simply as al-Ḥāfiẓ, is one of the greatest Sunnī scholars of *rijāl* and *ḥadīth*. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī says about him:

لكن من كان في ريب مما أحكم أنا على بعض الأحاديث فليعد إلى فتح الباري
فسيجد هناك أشياء كثيرة وكثيرة جداً ينتقدها الحافظ أحمد بن حجر العسقلاني الذي
يسمى بحق أمير المؤمنين في الحديث والذي أعتقد أنا وأظن أن كل من كان مشاركاً
في هذا العلم يوافقني على أنه لم تلد النساء بعده مثله.

But, whoever is in doubt concerning the verdicts I have given concerning some *aḥādīth* (in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*), let him refer to *Fath al-Bārī*, and he will find there lots and lots of things (in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*) which have been criticized by al-Ḥāfiẓ Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, who is rightly named the Amīr al-Mūminīn in *Ḥadīth*, and whom I believe – and I suppose that anyone who has this knowledge (i.e. science of *ḥadīth*) would agree with me – that no woman has ever given birth to anyone like him after him.¹⁰

The phrase “amīr al-mūminīn” is of course a reference to the supreme master.

Secondly, al-Ḥāfiẓ himself states in the Introduction to *al-Taqrīb*:

أنتي أحكم على كل شخص منهم بحكم يشمل أصح ما قيل فيه، وأعدل ما وصف به

I have graded every individual among them with a verdict that contains the most correct of what is said about him, and the most just of the descriptions given for him.¹¹

¹⁰ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Fatāwā* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Turāth al-Islāmī; 1st edition, 1414 H), p. 525

¹¹ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabḍih* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 24

In other words, a lot of things have been said about each of the narrators. But, not everything said about them is authentically transmitted, correct or accurate. So, al-Ḥāfiẓ, who is a king in the Sunnī science of *ḥadīth*, has compiled only “the most correct” and “the most just” of the statements made about them. No wonder, top Sunnī *ḥadīth* scientists like ‘Allāmah al-Albānī and others have relied *very* heavily upon this *al-Taqrīb* in all their works. We will be doing the same throughout this book and others. There are two clear advantages in doing this. One, it would ensure the accuracy of our conclusions on the various narrators. Two, it would keep our book concise and neat. As such, we will firstly quote the criticisms of a Sunnī scholar, mostly Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah, against a particular *ḥadīth* - which establishes ‘Alī’s superiority over all the Ṣaḥābah – and then examines the trustworthiness of all its narrators, primarily through *al-Taqrīb*. Where the name of the narrator is not present in *al-Taqrīb*, then we go for the books of Imām al-Dhahabī, who is equally a superweight in Sunnī *ḥadīth* sciences, as well as others like ‘Allāmah al-Albānī and Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ.

This humble author has adopted a very strict *takhrīj* style throughout the book. This is why he has excluded *aḥādīth* which he believes to be true, but which do not meet the strict standards of authenticity in the Sunnī *ḥadīth* sciences. In particular, we focus on the reliability of the narrators and the full connectivity of the chains. We also seek if there are corroborative supports for either the chains or the texts of the *aḥādīth*. Most importantly, we also investigate any possible hidden defects in the chains, such as *tadlīs*, poor memory and *irṣāl* of the narrators and present detailed researches to make clarifications wherever necessary. Sometimes, in order to save space, we do simply rely upon explicit authentications of chains and *aḥādīth* by the topmost Sunnī *ḥadīth* scientists. Through this methodology, we hope to give the full opportunity to whoever is researching the topic in order to determine the real truth.

Meanwhile, we do not neglect Sunnī arguments and reports in favour of the superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar either. We query their authenticity too, in line with strict standards of Sunnī *riḥāl* and further test their compatibility with the Qur’ān and undisputed history. The full details of our investigations are provided in our book, so that our esteemed reader can verify, reason and make his independent conclusions too.

Throughout our book, we have relied upon Sunnī books only, and specifically those of the highest standing in their respected categories. This way, we aim ensure full accuracy in everything. We implore Allāh to forgive us all our mistakes, and to accept this as a worthy act of *‘ibādah*.

1 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

INVESTIGATING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

وإما قوله قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا تضامكم علي والقضاء يستلزم العلم والدين فهذا الحديث لم يثبت و ليس له إسناد تقوم به الحجة ... لم يروه أحد في السنن المشهورة و لا المساند المعروفة لا بإسناد صحيح و لا ضعيف و إنما يروي من طريق من هو معروف بالكذب

As for his statement, “The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: **‘The best judge among you is ‘Alī’**”, and justice dispensation requires knowledge and religious devotion. **But, this ḥadīth is not authentic**, and it has no chain of transmission which makes it a valid proof ... **It is not recorded by anyone in the famous *Sunan* books**, and not (by anyone) in the well-known *Musnad* books – not with a *ṣaḥiḥ* chain, nor with a *da’if* chain. **It is only narrated through the route of notorious liars.**¹²

Meanwhile, Imām Ibn Majāh (d. 273 H) records in his *Sunan*:

حدثنا محمد بن المنثري ثنا عبد الوهاب بن عبد المجيد ثنا خالد الحذاء، عن أبي قلابة،

¹² Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, pp. 512-513

عن أنس بن مالك، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: أرحم أمتي بأمتي أبو بكر وأشدّهم في دين الله عمر وأصدقهم حياء عثمان وأفضاهم علي بن أبي طالب.

Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā – ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Abd al-Majīd – Khālīd al-Ḥazā – Abī Qilābah – Anas b. Mālīk:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “The most merciful of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is Abū Bakr. The most severe of them in the religion of Allāh is ‘Umar. The most shy of them is ‘Uthmān. **And the best judge among them is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.**”¹³

This report cancels out the first leg of our Shaykh’s claims: that the *ḥadīth* is not documented in any of the authoritative *Sunan* and *Musnad* books – whether with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain or even a *ḍa’īf* one!

So, the next question is: has the *ḥadīth* truly been narrated by a liar or liars?

The first narrator, Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā is *thiqah* (trustworthy) without absolutely any doubt. Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) for instance says about him:

محمد بن المثنى بن عبيد العزيز بفتح النون والزاي أبو موسى البصري.... ثقة ثبت

Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā b. ‘Ubayd al-‘Unazā, Abū Mūsā al-Baṣrī.... ***Thiqah* (trustworthy), *thabt* (accurate).**¹⁴

Elsewhere, he adds about him:

روى عنه (خ) مائة حديث وثلاثة أحاديث ومسلم سبعة وأثنيتين وسبعين حديثاً

Al-Bukhārī narrated 103 *aḥādīth* from him (in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*), and Muslim also narrated 772 *aḥādīth* (from him in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*).¹⁵

¹³ Ibn Majah Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan* (Dār al-Fīkr) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 1, p. 55, # 154

¹⁴ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 129, # 6283

¹⁵ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb* (Dār al-Fīkr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 9, p. 378, # 698

Apparently, he was a super-weight in Sunnī *aḥādīth*.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ also says about the second narrator:

عبد الوهاب بن عبد المجيد بن الصلت الثقفي أبو محمد البصري ثقة تغير قبل موته
بثلاث سنين

‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Abd al-Majīd b. al-Ṣalt al-Thaqafī, Abū Muḥammad al-Baṣṭī: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**. He changed (i.e. his memory weakened) 3 years before his death.¹⁶

In his *Lisān*, he gives further, crucial information about him:

لكنه ما ضر تغيره حديثه فإنه ما حدث بحديث في زمن التغير

But, his change (in memory) does not harm his *aḥādīth*, for he never narrated a single *ḥadīth* during the period of the change.¹⁷

So, what about the remaining narrators? Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ saves us a lot of time with this *tahqīq*:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا عفان ثنا وهيب ثنا خالد الحذاء عن أبي قلابة عن
أنس بن مالك عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم إسناده صحيح على شرط
الشيخين

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – ‘Affān – Wuhayb – Khālīd al-Ḥazā – Abū Qilābah – Anas b. Mālīk – the Prophet, peace be upon him **Its chain is ṣaḥīḥ UPON THE STANDARD OF THE TWO SHAYKHS.**¹⁸

We understand from this that both Khālīd al-Ḥazā and Abū Qilābah are *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrators of both *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*,

¹⁶ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 626, # 4275

¹⁷ Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān* (Beirut: Manshūrāt Muasassat al-‘A’lamī li al-Maṭbū’āt; 2nd edition, 1390 H), vol. 4, p. 88, # 168

¹⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 3, p. 281, # 14022

like Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā.

Interestingly, Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H), Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) and ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) also confirm that the second narrator is like the others too in this regard. The ‘Allāmah writes:

أخرجه الترمذي (2 / 309) وابن ماجه (154) وابن حبان (2218) و (2219) والحاكم (3 / 422) من طريق عبد الوهاب بن عبد المجيد الثقفي حدثنا خالد الحذاء عن أبي قلابة عن أنس قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: فذكره، وقال الترمذي: " حديث حسن صحيح ". وقال الحاكم: " هذا إسناد صحيح على شرط الشيخين ". ووافقه الذهبي وهو كما قال.

Al-Tirmidhī (2/309), Ibn Majah (154), Ibn Ḥibbān (2218) and al-Ḥākim (3/422) narrated it through the route of **‘ABD AL-WAHHĀB B. ‘ABD AL-MAJĪD AL-THAQAFĪ – Khālīd al-Hazā – Abū Qilābah – Anas – the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him.** Al-Tirmidhī said: “The *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*”. Al-Ḥākim (also) said, “**This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* UPON THE STANDARD OF THE TWO SHAYKHS**”. Al-Dhahabī concurred with him, and it is (indeed) as they both have stated.¹⁹

In a simple summary, *Ḥadīth al-Qaḍā* – as documented by Imām Ibn Majah – has a chain of transmission that is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) and Muslim (d. 261 H). All its narrators are relied upon in both *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and there is no disconnection anywhere in the chain. Apparently, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s weird, unfounded claim that the *ḥadīth* is narrated only by notorious liars is itself a sickening rape of the truth!

There is equally a *mutāba’ah* for Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā copied by Imām al-Haythamī (d. 807 H):

أخبرنا أحمد بن مكرم بن خالد البرقي، حدثنا علي بن المديني، حدثنا عبد الوهاب الثقفي، حدثنا خالد الحذاء، عن أبي قلابة عن أنس بن مالك قال: قال رسول الله -

¹⁹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqhīyah wa Fawā'idihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 3, p. 223, # 1224

صلى الله عليه وسلم: ارحم أمتي بأمتي أبو بكر، وأشدّهم في أمر الله عمر، وأصدقهم
حياء عثمان، وأفضاهم علي

**Aḥmad b. Makram b. Khālīd al-Birtī – ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī – ‘Abd al-
Wahhāb al-Thaqafī – Khālīd al-Ḥazā – Abū Qilābah – Anas b. Mālik:**

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: “The most merciful of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is Abū Bakr. The most severe of them concerning the Command of Allāh is ‘Umar. The most shy of them is ‘Uthmān. **And the best judge among them is ‘Alī.**²⁰

We already know that the last four narrators – including Anas – are *thiqah* narrators of both *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. So, we only have to find out the status of the first two narrators. Once again, Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ saves us time. Imām Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 H) records this chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

أخبرنا أحمد بن محمد بن خالد البرقي قال حدثنا علي بن المديني قال حدثنا معن بن
عيسى قال حدثنا مالك بن أنس عن صفوان بن سليم عن عطاء بن يسار عن أبي
سعيد الخدري

**Aḥmad b. Makram b. Khālīd al-Birtī – ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī – Ma’n b.
‘Īsā – Mālik b. Anas – Safwān b. Sulaym – ‘Aṭā b. Yasār – Abū Sa’īd al-
Khudrī**²¹

Al-Arnāuṭ says:

إسناده صحيح على شرط البخاري رجاله ثقات رجال الصحيح غير علي بن المديني
فمن رجال البخاري

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of al-Bukhārī. Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), narrators of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, except ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī

²⁰ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Mawārid al-Zamān ila Zawāid Ibn Ḥibbān* (Damascus: Dār al-Thaqāfah al-‘Arabīyyah; 1st edition, 1412 H) [annotators: Ḥusayn Ṣālim Asad al-Dārānī and ‘Abd ‘Alī al-Kūshk], vol. 7, pp. 161-162, # 2218

²¹ Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad b. Ḥibbān b. Mu’adh b. Ma’bad al-Tamīmī al-Dārimī al-Bustī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bi Tartīb Ibn Balbān* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 2nd edition, 1414 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 16, p. 404, # 7393

because he is from the narrators of (*Ṣaḥīḥ*) *al-Bukhārī* (only).²²

So, both al-Birtī and ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī are *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrators of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* too. As such, the *mutaba’ah* of ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī to Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā in *Ḥadīth al-Qaḍā* is *ṣaḥīḥ* as well, upon the standard of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*!

The *ḥadīth* has equally been transmitted from other Ṣaḥābah, apart from Anas. Imām al-Haythamī for instance records:

عن جابر بن عبد الله الأنصاري قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : أرحم أمتي بأمتي أبو بكر وأرق أمتي لأمتي عمر وأصدق أمتي حياء عثمان وأقضى أمتي علي بن أبي طالب

Narrated Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: “The most merciful of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is Abū Bakr. The kindest of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is ‘Umar. The most shy of my *Ummah* is ‘Uthmān. **The best judge of my *Ummah* is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib**”.²³

He comments:

رواه الطبراني في الأوسط وإسناده حسن

Al-Ṭabarānī narrated it in *al-Awsat*, and its chain is *ḥasan*.²⁴

In modern prints of *Mu’jam al-Awsat* of Imām al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H), this *ḥadīth*, unfortunately, is no longer present! The previous existence of this report in *al-Awsat* is further confirmed by Imām al-Haythamī (d. 974 H):

و في رواية الطبراني في الأوسط أرحم أمتي بأمتي أبو بكر وأرق أمتي لأمتي عمر وأصدق أمتي حياء عثمان وأقضى أمتي علي بن أبي طالب

In the report of al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsat*, it is recorded: “The most

²² *Ibid*

²³ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, p. 235, # 14918

²⁴ *Ibid*

merciful of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is Abū Bakr. The kindest of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is ‘Umar. The most shy of my *Ummah* is ‘Uthmān. **The best judge of my *Ummah* is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālīb**”²⁵

It has gone missing in the same *al-Ansat* after the time of al-Haytamī.

Finally, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī has copied *Ḥadīth al-Qaḍā* from yet another Ṣaḥābī, namely Ibn ‘Umar:

أَرَأَيْتُمْ أُمَّتِي بِأُمَّتِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَأَشَدَّهُمْ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ عُمَرُ وَأَصْدَقُهُمْ حَيَاءُ عِثْمَانَ وَأَقْضَاهُمْ
عَلِي

The most compassionate of my *Ummah* to my *Ummah* is Abū Bakr, and the most severe of them in the religion of Allāh is ‘Umar. The most shy of them is ‘Uthmān **and the best judge among them is ‘Alī**.²⁶

The ‘Allāmah says:

(صحيح) ... [ع] عن ابن عمر.

Ṣaḥīḥ ... (Narrated) by Ibn ‘Umar²⁷

²⁵ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-Haytamī, *al-Ṣawāiq al-Muḥriqah ‘alā Abl al-Raḥīl wa al-Ḍalāl wa al-Zindiqah* (Beirut: Muassasat al-Risālah; 1st edition, 1997 CE) [annotators: ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Turkī and Kāmil Muḥammad Khurātī], vol. 1, p. 226

²⁶ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdri al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ wa Ziyādātuhu* (Al-Maktab al-Islāmī), vol. 1, p. 211, # 868

²⁷ *Ibid*

2 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

CONFESSIONS OF THE ṢAḤĀBAH

The companions of the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālīhi*, used to admit, unanimously, that Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *‘alaihi al-salām*, was indeed the best judge among them. Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H), for instance records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا وكيع ثنا سفيان عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن عباس قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: علي أقضانا وأبي أقرؤنا

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Wakī’ – Sufyān – Ḥabīb b. Abī Thābit – Sa’īd b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “**‘Alī is the best judge among us**, and Ubayy is the best reciter among us.”²⁸

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ says:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.²⁹

²⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 5, p. 113, # 21122

²⁹ *Ibid*

Imām Aḥmad further records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن سعيد عن سفيان حدثني حبيب يعني بن أبي
ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن عباس رضي الله عنها قال: قال عمر علي أقضانا
وأبي أقرؤنا

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) –
Yahyā b. Saʿīd – Sufyān – Ḥabīb b. Abī Thābit – Saʿīd b. Jubayr – Ibn
‘Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with them both:

‘Umar said: “**Alī is the best judge among us**, and Ubayy is the best
reciter among us.”³⁰

Al-Arnāuṭ again comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.³¹

This is the third *athar* recorded on the same matter by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا سويد بن سعيد في سنة ست وعشرين ومائتين ثنا
علي بن مسهر عن الأعمش عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن سعيد بن جبير عن بن
عباس قال خطبنا عمر رضي الله عنه على منبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
فقال: علي رضي الله عنه أقضانا وأبي رضي الله عنه أقرؤنا

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) –
Suwayd b. Saʿīd – ‘Alī b. Mashar – al-Aʿmash – Ḥabīb b. Abī Thābit –
Saʿīd b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, delivered a sermon on the pulpit
of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, and said: “**Alī, may
Allāh be pleased with him, is the best judge among us**, and Ubayy,
may Allāh be pleased with him, is the best reciter.”³²

³⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 5, p. 113, # 21123

³¹ *Ibid*

³² *Ibid*, vol. 5, p. 113, # 21124

Shaykh Shu'ayb al-Arnāūṭ has a simple verdict on it:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*³³

Notably, ‘Umar mentioned this publicly and none among the Ṣaḥābah present – including the most senior ones - objected. This evidences their unanimous concurrence with him on the matter.

Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) records the same *athar* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

حدثنا عمرو بن علي حدثنا يحيى حدثنا سفيان عن حبيب عن سعيد بن جبير عن
ابن عباس قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: أقرؤنا أبي وأفضانا علي

‘Amr b. ‘Alī – Yaḥyā – Sufyān – Ḥabīb – Sa’īd b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “The best reciter among us is Ubayy, **and the best judge among us is ‘Alī.**”³⁴

Apart from ‘Umar, all the other Ṣaḥābah also explicitly declared that the best judge among them – including their most senior ones living in Madīnah - was none other than Amīr al-Mūminīn. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) records:

أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي بهمدان ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين ثنا آدم بن أبي
إياس ثنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد عن علقمة عن عبد الله قال
كنا نتحدث أن أفضى أهل المدينة علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه

‘Abd al-Raḥman b. al-Ḥasan al-Qādī – Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn – Ādam b. Abī Iyās – Shu’bah – Abū Ishāq – ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd – ‘Alqamah – ‘Abd Allāh (b. Mas’ūd):

“We used to SAY that the best judge among the people of

³³ *Ibid*

³⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā’īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’uḥfī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 4, p. 1628, # 4211

Madīnah was ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him.”³⁵

Al-Ḥākim says:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.³⁶

Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H), on his part, keeps silent about it. The reason is unclear since the *athar* has a perfectly *ṣaḥīḥ* chain. Meanwhile, he has personally authenticated the *sanad* and all its narrators in the same book in other *ahādīth*! For example, al-Ḥākim records this chain:

أخبرنا عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين ثنا آدم بن أبي إياس ثنا
شعبة عن منصور عن إبراهيم عن علقمة عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه

‘Abd al-Raḥman b. al-Ḥasan al-Qādī – Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn –
Ādam b. Abī Iyās – Shu’bah – Maṣṣūr – Ibrāhīm – ‘Alqamah – ‘Abd
Allāh (b. Mas’ūd), may Allāh be pleased with him.³⁷

The only differences in this *sanad* from that of the *athar* are Maṣṣūr and Ibrāhīm. Al-Ḥākim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.³⁸

Interestingly, al-Dhahabī confirms the verdict:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.³⁹

³⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 3, p. 145, # 4656

³⁶ *Ibid*

³⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 4, p. 372, # 7963

³⁸ *Ibid*

³⁹ *Ibid*

This proves that ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. al-Ḥasan al-Qādī, Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn, Ādam b. Abī Iyās, Shu’bah and ‘Alqamah are *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrators!

But, what is the status Abū Ishāq and ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd – the only remaining narrators of Ibn Mas’ūd’s *athar*? Note this chain documented by Imām al-Ḥākim:

أخبرنا أبو زكريا العنبري ثنا محمد بن عبد السلام ثنا إسحاق أنبأ يحيى بن آدم ثنا
إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه

Abū Zakariyāh al-‘Anbarī – Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Salām – Ishāq – Yaḥyā b. Ādam – Isrāīl – **Abū Ishāq** – **‘Abd al-Rahman b. Yazīd** – ‘Abd Allāh (b. Mas’ūd), may Allāh be pleased with him.⁴⁰

Al-Ḥākim comments:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁴¹

Al-Dhahabī also reiterates:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.⁴²

As such, all the narrators of the *athar* are *thiqah* (trustworthy).

But then, is there any break between Shu’bah and Abū Ishāq? We have seen the unbroken connection between all the other narrators except these two. This chain, recorded by al-Ḥākim, puts the seal on things:

حدثني محمد بن صالح بن هائق ثنا المسيب بن زهير ثنا عاصم بن علي ثنا شعبة عن
أبي إسحاق قال : سمعت وهب بن جابر يحدث عن عبد الله بن عمرو رضي الله

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 244, # 2888

⁴¹ *Ibid*

⁴² *Ibid*

عنها

Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥānī – al-Musayyab b. Zuhayr – ‘Āṣim b. ‘Alī – **Shu’bah** – **Abū Ishāq** – Wahb b. Jābir – ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Amr, may Allāh be pleased with them both⁴³

Al-Ḥākim states:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁴⁴

Al-Dhahabī agrees:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.⁴⁵

Simply put, the chain of the *athar* of Ibn Mas’ūd is *ṣaḥīḥ*. All the narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), and there is no disconnection whatsoever in the *sanad*.

⁴³ *Ibid*, vol. 4, p. 536, # 8505

⁴⁴ *Ibid*

⁴⁵ *Ibid*

3 ḤADĪTH AL-QAḌĀ

‘ALĪ’S SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE QUR’ĀN AND SUNNAH

There is no dispute about the fact that Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, was the most competent in justice dispensation among all the Ṣaḥābah. In fact, he is the best judge in our whole *Ummah* till the Day of *al-Qiyāmah* after its Prophet, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālihi*. On a specific level, he was better - in terms of justice dispensation - than Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān. So, what is the direct implication of this?

In Islām, justice dispensation is based squarely upon the Qur’ān and Sunnah:

فاحكم بينهم بما أنزل الله

So, judge between them **by what Allāh has revealed**.⁴⁶

The Qur’ān itself, in its entirety, is described as “a judgment” by its Master:

وكذلك أنزلناه حكما عربيا

And thus We have sent it down as **a judgment** in Arabic⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Qur’ān 5:48

⁴⁷ Qur’ān 13:37

As such, complete knowledge of everything in it is required for effective justice dispensation.

Moreover, the Sunnah is the divinely inspired explanations of this “judgment” called al-Qur’ān:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ

And We have sent down unto you (Muḥammad) *al-Dhikr* (i.e. the Qur’ān) **that you may explain clearly** to mankind what is sent down to them.⁴⁸

Apparently, a person does not know the Book of Allāh until he has known its explanations by the Messenger of Allāh. These explanations, according to the same Book, only originated from the Lord as well:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

He (Muḥammad) never speaks of (his own) desire or caprice. **It is nothing but a *wahy* that is revealed (to him).**⁴⁹

It is obvious. If anyone were more knowledgeable of the Qur’ān and Sunnah than ‘Alī in this *Ummah*, he (‘Alī) would not have been its best judge. It is simply unfathomable that Allāh and His Messenger would have conferred upon him such a rank while there was/is another – in the *Ummah* as a whole - who was/is more competent with the tools of justice dispensation than he was!

It is noteworthy that knowledge of the revelations of Allāh surpasses mere knowledge of *al-ḥalāl* (the permissible) and *al-ḥarām* (the prohibited). It covers everything from the Lord to humanity. Most importantly, merely knowing the legal status of a thing is not enough for justice dispensation. The judge must equally be fully aware of the penalties (if any) prescribed for it, and the best ways and circumstances to exercise personal discretion in different cases in line with the Wish of Allāh. None, apparently, is as competent in these fields as ‘Alī.

At this point, it is apposite to quote this groundbreaking *riwāyah* referenced by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 H):

⁴⁸ Qur’ān 16:44

⁴⁹ Qur’ān 53:3-4

قال شعبة بن الحجاج ، عن سَمَك ، عن خالد بن عَرَّوَة أنه سمع عليا وشعبة أيضًا ، عن القاسم بن أبي بزة ، عن أبي الطُّفَيْل ، سمع عليًا. وثبت أيضًا من غير وجه ، عن أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب : أنه صعد منبر الكوفة فقال : لا تسألوني عن آية في كتاب الله ، ولا عن سنة عن رسول الله ، إلا أنبأتكم بذلك.

Shu'bah b. al-Hajjāj, from Simāk, from Khālīd b. 'Ar'arah that he heard 'Alī; and Shu'bah again narrated from al-Qāsim b. Abī Barraḥ from Abū al-Tufayl that he heard 'Alī; and IT IS ALSO AUTHENTICALLY TRANSMITTED through many chains that Amīr al-Mūminīn 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb climbed the pulpit of Kūfah and said, **"You will not ask me about ANY verse in the Book of Allāh, or about ANY Sunnah from the Messenger of Allāh, except that I will inform you about that."**⁵⁰

None of the Ṣaḥābah was *ever* able to make a similar claim!

Secondly, justice must be administered with utmost fairness and equity:

وإن حكمت فاحكم بينهم بالقسط

If you judge, judge between them with fairness and equity.⁵¹

This verse allows the use of personal discretion in the administration of justice, especially in all cases where no divinely fixed penalties or judgments are available. But even then, it also reiterates the notion that the judge must know everything in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah! Full knowledge of both is required to determine whether or not there is a fixed penalty or judgment concerning a particular case. If there is none, then the judge uses his discretion. Where the judge does not know whether Allāh has already fixed the judgment for the issue before him – due to an insufficient knowledge of the Book and the Tradition - he is most likely to effect a miscarriage of justice, without even realizing it!

Moreover, the judge must give his judgments with the best interests of fairness and equity at heart. This is the second message of the above verse. Where there is a divinely fixed penalty or judgment, he must apply it in the

⁵⁰ Abū al-Fīdā Ismā'īl b. 'Umar b. Kathīr al-Qurshī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm* (Dār al-Ṭaybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah], vol. 7, p. 413

⁵¹ Qur'ān 5:42

fairest and most equitable manners. Where there is no such fixed penalty or judgment, then he equally must adopt his personal discretion in ways that best ensure a completely fair and equitable dispensation of justice.

Amīr al-Mūminīn has been declared the best judge by Allāh and His Messenger. Apparently, he is the one, within Islām, with the best knowledge and practice in justice dispensation. Most importantly, he is the fairest and the most equitable among us all – including the Ṣaḥābah - in the application of Allāh’s Fixed Verdicts and in the just administration of personal discretion.

The most crucial part of this discourse, probably, is stated in this verse:

يا داود إنا جعلناك خليفة في الأرض فاحكم بين الناس بالحق

O Dāwūd! We have appointed you a *khalīfah* over the earth. Therefore, judge between mankind with the truth.⁵²

First and foremost, it is clear from this verse that justice dispensation is the job of the *khalīfah*, to the exclusion of all others. He is the judge of “mankind”. Every single other human beings comes under his juridical authority. Of course, he might appoint subordinate judges to assist him, under his close supervision. However, the job belongs to him alone. Therefore, whoever is the most qualified to be judge is also the most qualified for the *khalīfah*!

Besides, the competent judge is he who is able to discern the truth, and who judges with the truth. Judgment with the truth involves the objective application of Allāh’s Fixed Verdicts over relevant issues, as well as the selfless administration of personal discretion in deserving cases. The judge therefore must be very intelligent and completely truthful. Application of personal discretion to reach true justice requires an extremely high level of intelligence, selflessness, sincerity and honesty. An unintelligent person cannot be expected to skillfully detect the truth from a clog of complex arguments and proofs before him. Moreover, a corrupt or self-serving fellow cannot be expected to judge others with the truth, or to apply his personal discretion fairly. With these facts in mind, one can then safely conclude and proclaim that Amīr al-Mūminīn - being the best judge in this *Ummah* - was the most qualified for the *khalīfah* immediately after the Prophet. In addition, he is the most truthful, the most intelligent, the most

⁵² Qur’ān 38:26

selfless, the most sincere, the most honest, and the best in recognizing and applying the truth in this *Ummah* after the Messenger.

4 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE I

The *khalīfah* of Muslims is also their sovereign judge:

يا داوود إنا جعلناك خليفة في الأرض فاحكم بين الناس بالحق

O Dāwūd! We have appointed you a *khalīfah* over the earth. Therefore, **judge between mankind** with the truth.⁵³

Since ‘Umar was recognized by most Muslims of his time as their *khalīfah*, it follows naturally that he was also their sovereign judge. The question is: was ‘Umar a *competent* judge? To find the answer, we must look at some iconic cases decided by ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.

Imām Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 H) records about an interesting case:

ثنا يونس بن عبد الأعلى و محمد بن عبد الله بن الحكم قالوا ثنا ابن وهب أخبرني جريز بن حازم عن سليمان بن مهران عن أبي ظبيان عن ابن عباس قال: مر علي بن أبي طالب بمجنونة بني فلان قد زنت أمر عمر برجمها فردها علي و قال لعمر : يا أمير المؤمنين أترجم هذه ؟ قال: نعم قال : أما تذكر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال: رفع القلم عن ثلاثة عن المجنون المغلوب على عقله و عن النائم حتى يستيقظ و عن الصبي حتى يحتلم قال : صدقت فحلى عنها

⁵³ Qur’ān 38:26

Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-A’lā and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥakam – Ibn Wahb – Jarīr b. Ḥāzim – Sulaymān b. Mihrān – Abū Zibyan – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Alī b. Abī Tālib passed by **a lunatic woman** from so-and-so tribe, and she had committed adultery. **‘Umar ordered that she be stoned to death.** So, ‘Alī returned her and said to ‘Umar, “O Amīr al-Mūminīn! Do you want to stone this (woman)?” He (‘Umar) replied, “Yes”. He (‘Alī) said, “Do you remember that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: ‘The pen has been lifted about three people: the mentally ill, the person sleeping until he wakes up, and the child until he becomes an adolescent.’” He (‘Umar) responded, “You have said the truth”. So, ‘Umar freed her (i.e. the lunatic woman).⁵⁴

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) comments:

حديث صحيح رجاله ثقات

It is a *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*. Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy).⁵⁵

Elsewhere, Imām Ibn Khuzaymah also records:

أنا أبو طاهر نا أبو بكر نا يونس بن عبد الأعلى و محمد بن عبد الله بن عبد الحكم
قالا أخبرنا ابن وهب أخبرني جرير بن حازم عن سليمان بن مهران عن أبي ظبيان
عن ابن عباس قال: مر علي بن أبي طالب بمجنونة بني فلان قد زنت أمر عمر برجمها
فرجعها علي وقال لعمر: يا أمير المؤمنين ترجم هذه؟ قال: نعم قال: أو تذكر أن
رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: رفع القلم عن ثلاث عن المجنون المغلوب على
عقله وعن النائم حتى يستيقظ وعن الصبي حتى يحتلم قال: صدقت فحلى عنها

Abū Tāhir – Abū Bakr Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-A’lā and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥakam – Ibn Wahb – Jarīr b. Ḥāzim – Sulaymān b. Mihrān – Abū Zibyan – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Alī b. Abī Tālib passed by **a lunatic woman** from so-and-so tribe, and

⁵⁴ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muhammad Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī], vol. 4, p. 348, # 3048

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

she had committed adultery. ‘Umar ordered that she be stoned to death. So, ‘Alī returned her and said to ‘Umar, “O Amīr al-Mūminīn! Do you want to stone this (woman)?” He (‘Umar) replied, “Yes”. He (‘Alī) said, “Do you remember that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: ‘The pen has been lifted about three people: the mentally ill, the person sleeping until he wakes up, and the child until he becomes an adolescent.’” He (‘Umar) responded, “You have said the truth”. So, he freed her (i.e. the lunatic woman).⁵⁶

‘Allāmah al-Albānī rules:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁷

The exact narration above is documented by Imām Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 H) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* through the route of his teacher, Imām Ibn Khuzaymah, with the same chain.⁵⁸ ‘Allāmah al-Albānī again says:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁹

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ also comments:

رجاله ثقات رجال مسلم

Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), narrators of (*Ṣaḥīḥ*) Muslim.⁶⁰

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H), a student of Ibn Ḥibbān, records the *ḥadīth* as well:

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 102, # 1003

⁵⁷ *Ibid*

⁵⁸ Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad b. Ḥibbān b. Mu’ādh b. Ma’bad al-Tamīmī al-Dārimī al-Bustī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bi Tartīb Ibn Balbān* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 2nd edition, 1414 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 1, p. 356, # 143

⁵⁹ *Ibid*

⁶⁰ *Ibid*

حدثنا أبو بكر بن إسحاق الفقيه وعبد الله بن محمد بن موسى قالا : أنبأ أحمد بن عيسى المصري أنبأ ابن وهب أخبرني جرير بن حازم عن سليمان بن مهران عن أبي ظبيان عن ابن عباس قال مر علي بن أبي طالب بمجنونة بني فلان وقد زنت وأمر عمر بن الخطاب برجمها فردها علي وقال لعمر : يا أمير المؤمنين أترجم هذه ؟ قال : نعم قال : أو ما تذكر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : رفع القلم عن ثلاث : عن المجنون المغلوب على عقله وعن النائم حتى يستيقظ وعن الصبي حتى يحتلم قال صدقت فحلى عنها

Abū Bakr b. Ishāq al-Faqīh and ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā – Aḥmad b. Īsā al-Miṣrī - Ibn Wahb – Jarīr b. Ḥāzim – Sulaymān b. Mihrān – Abū Zibyan – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib passed by **a lunatic woman** from so-and-so tribe, and she had committed adultery. **‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb ordered that she be stoned to death.** So, ‘Alī returned her and said to ‘Umar, “O Amīr al-Mūminīn! Do you want to stone this (woman)?” He (‘Umar) replied, “Yes”. He (‘Alī) said, “Do you remember that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: ‘The pen has been lifted about three people: the mentally ill, the person sleeping until he wakes up, and the child until he becomes an adolescent.’” He (‘Umar) responded, “You have said the truth”. So, he freed her (i.e. the lunatic woman).⁶¹

Al-Ḥākim says:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs⁶²

Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) concurs:

على شرطها

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of both of them⁶³

⁶¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 389, # 949

⁶² *Ibid*

⁶³ *Ibid*

Imām Abū Dāwud (d. 275 H) documents a fuller version of the *ḥadīth* that gives some disturbing details:

حدثنا عثمان بن أبي شيبة ثنا جرير عن الأعمش عن أبي ظبيان عن ابن عباس قال:
 أتني عمر بمجنونة قد زنت فاستشار فيها أناساً فأمر بها عمر أن ترحم فمر بها علي
 بن أبي طالب رضوان الله عليه فقال ما شأن هذه ؟ قالوا مجنونة بني فلان زنت فأمر
 بها عمر أن ترحم قال فقال ارجعوا بها ثم أتاه فقال يا أمير المؤمنين أما علمت أن القلم
 قد رفع عن ثلاثة عن المجنون حتى يبرأ وعن النائم حتى يستيقظ وعن الصبي حتى
 يعقل ؟ قال بلى قال فما بال هذه ترحم ؟ قال لا شيء قال فأرسلها قال فأرسلها قال
 فجعل يكبر

‘Uthmān b. Abī Shaybah – Jarīr – al-A’mash – Abū Zibyan – Ibn
 ‘Abbās:

A lunatic woman, who had committed adultery, was brought to ‘Umar. **So, he consulted with some people about her, and therefore ordered that she be stoned to death.** But, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *riḍwānullāh ‘alaihi*, passed by her and said, “What is the issue with this (woman)?” They replied, “She is a lunatic woman from so-and-so tribe. She committed adultery and ‘Umar ordered that she be stoned to death.” So, he (‘Alī) said, “Return with her (to ‘Umar).” Then he (‘Alī) came to him (‘Umar), and said, “O Amīr al-Mūminīn! Do you know that the pen has been lifted in the case of a lunatic until he is cured, and of someone sleeping until he wakes up, and in the case of a child until he becomes mentally mature?” He (‘Umar) replied, “Yes, I do”. **He (‘Alī) asked, “So, why do you want to stone this (woman)?” He (‘Umar) replied, “There is NOTHING!”** He (‘Alī) said, “Free her”. So, he (‘Umar) freed her, saying *Allāhu Akbar*!⁶⁴

‘Allāmah al-Albānī says:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Abū Dāwud Sulaymān b. al-Ash’ath al-Sijistānī al-Azdī, *Sunan* (Dār al-Fikr) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 2, p. 545, # 4399

⁶⁵ *Ibid*

Reading all the narrations together, one gets the full picture of what happened:

1. A lunatic woman was charged with adultery, which she apparently committed in her still extant state of insanity.
2. The *Shari'ah* provides that crimes committed in a state of insanity are not justiciable.
3. 'Umar was well aware of this rule, and was fully convinced that the lunatic woman truly committed the adultery in a state of insanity. He nonetheless consulted with his team of judicial advisers (which excluded 'Alī) on the matter, and eventually made up his mind to execute her.
4. While convicting the lunatic woman and passing the death sentence against her, 'Umar fully remembered the above-mentioned rule of the *Shari'ah*.
5. Nonetheless, 'Umar ordered the execution of the lunatic woman for “nothing”, in his own words.
6. Amīr al-Mūminīn 'Alī saw a clear miscarriage of justice in the judgment of 'Umar, and stood against the order of the commander-in-chief, at great personal risks. He prevented 'Umar's executioners from carrying out their illegal orders.
7. 'Alī asked 'Umar if the latter knew the *Shari'ah* ruling concerning lunatic people. 'Umar replied: “Yes, I do”. Surprised, he further asked the latter why he wanted to execute the lunatic woman in that case. 'Umar made no secret of his intention. There was simply “nothing”! There was no reason. He only wished to kill the woman, and that was it!
8. 'Alī reminded him of the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet on the matter. Perhaps, 'Umar had forgotten the source of the *Shari'i* ruling. Luckily, 'Umar admitted to the truth of the *ḥadīth*.
9. At this point, 'Alī advised him to free the innocent lunatic woman. Fortunately for her, 'Umar accepted 'Alī's advice and allowed her to go free.

Without 'Alī's timely intervention, 'Umar would have deliberately executed the innocent woman for “nothing”!

5 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE II

Imām Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327 H) records about another iconic judgment delivered by ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb in his capacity as the *khalīfah* over the *Ummah*:

أخبرنا أبي ، ثنا أبو بكر محمد بن بشار ، ثنا ابن أبي عدي ، عن سعيد ، عن قتادة عن أبي حرب ، يعني : ابن أبي الاسود الديلي ، عن أبيه ، ان عمر بن الخطاب ، رفعت اليه امرأة ولدت ستة اشهر ، فهم برجمها ، فبلغ ذلك عليا فقال : ليس عليها رجم ، قال الله تعالى : والوالدات يرضعن اولادهن حولين كاملين وستة اشهر ، ذلك ثلاثون شهرا .

My father (Abū Ḥātim) – Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Bashār – Ibn Abī ‘Adī – Sa’īd – Qatādah – Abū Ḥarb b. Abī al-Aswad al-Dīlī – his father (Abū al-Aswad al-Daylī):

A woman was brought to ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. **She had delivered after (only) six months of pregnancy. So, he (‘Umar) resolved to stone her to death.** This (decision) reached ‘Alī. Therefore, he (‘Alī) said, “She does not deserve *any* penalty of stoning to death. Allāh says: ‘The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years (2:233)’. This (period) plus six months equals thirty months (mentioned in 46:15

as the total for both pregnancy and suckling)”.⁶⁶

Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) submits about the first narrator:

أبو حاتم الرازي محمد بن إدريس بن المنذر بن داود بن مهران: إمام الحافظ، الناقد،
شيخ المحدثين

Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī, Muḥammad b. Idrīs b. al-Mundhir b. Dāwud b. Mīhrān: **al-imām (the leader in Ḥadīth), al-ḥāfiẓ (the ḥadīth scientist), al-nāqid (the ḥadīth critic), shaykh al-muḥadithin** (teacher of the ḥadīth scientists and narrators).⁶⁷

About the second narrator, al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) says:

محمد بن بشار بن عثمان العبدي البصري أبو بكر بندار ثقة

Muḥammad b. Bashār b. ‘Uthmān al-‘Abdī al-Baṣrī, Abū Bakr Bandār: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**.⁶⁸

What of the third narrator? Al-Dhahabī submits:

محمد بن إبراهيم بن أبي عدي أبو عمرو، بصري، ثقة

Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī ‘Adī, Abū ‘Amr, from Baṣra: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**.⁶⁹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ agrees:

محمد بن إبراهيم بن أبي عدي وقد ينسب لجدّه وقيل هو إبراهيم أبو عمرو البصري
ثقة

⁶⁶ Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abī Ḥatīm al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr Ibn Abī Ḥatīm* (al-Maktabah al-‘Aṣriyyah) [annotator: As‘ad Muḥammad al-Tayyib], vol. 2, p. 428, # 2264

⁶⁷ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar A‘lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the thirteenth volume: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūṭ and ‘Alī Abū Zayd], vol. 13, p. 247, # 129

⁶⁸ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 58, # 5772

⁶⁹ Shams al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Dhahabī al-Dimashqī, *al-Kāshif fī Ma‘rifat Man Lahū Rimṭat fī al-Kutub al-Sittah* (Jeddah: Dār al-Qiblah li al-Thaqāfat al-Islāmiyyah; 1st edition, 1413 H), vol. 2, p. 154, # 4700

Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī ‘Adī.... Abū ‘Amr al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy).⁷⁰

The fourth narrator is Sa‘īd, and al-Ḥāfiẓ comments on him in this manner:

سعيد بن أبي عروبة مهران البصري ثقة حافظ له تصانيف لكنه كثير
التدليس واختلط وكان من أثبت الناس في قتادة

Sa‘īd b. Abī ‘Arūbah Mihrān al-Yashkirī, their freed slave, Abū al-Naḍar al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **ḥāfiẓ** (a *ḥadīth* scientist), he wrote books. However, he did a lot of *tadlīs*, and became confused. **He was one of the most authoritative narrators from Qatādah.**⁷¹

Concerning the fifth narrator, al-Ḥāfiẓ further submits:

قتادة بن دعامة بن قتادة السدوسي أبو الخطاب البصري ثقة ثبت

Qatādah b. Da‘āmah b. Qatādah al-Sudūsī, Aboo al-Khaṭṭaab al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), *thabt* (accurate).⁷²

Like the fourth narrator, he too is accused of *tadlīs*, as proclaimed by al-Ḥāfiẓ:

قتادة بن دعامة السدوسي البصري صاحب أنس بن مالك رضي الله تعالى عنه كان
حافظ عصره وهو مشهور بالتدليس وصفه به النسائي وغيره

Qatādah b. Da‘āmah al-Sudūsī al-Baṣrī, the companion of Anas b. Mālik, may Allāh the Most High be pleased with him. He was the *ḥāfiẓ* (*ḥadīth* scientist) of his time, **and he is famous for *tadlīs***. Al-Nasāī and others described him with it.⁷³

The sixth narrator is trustworthy as well, as affirmed by al-Ḥāfiẓ:

⁷⁰ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 2, p. 50, # 5715

⁷¹ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 360, #2372

⁷² *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 26, # 5535

⁷³ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Ta’rīf Aḥl al-Taqdīs bi Marūtib al-Manṣiḥin bi al-Tadlīs* (Jordan: Maktabah al-Manār; 1st edition) [annotator: Dr. Āṣim b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qaryūnī], p. 43, # 92

أبو حرب بن أبي الأسود الديلي البصري ثقة

Abū Ḥarb b. Abī al-Aswad al-Dīlī al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**⁷⁴

With regards to the last narrator, al-Ḥāfiẓ states:

أبو الأسود الديلي.... ثقة

Abū al-Aswad al-Dīlī....: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**⁷⁵

In a word, all the narrators are trustworthy. But, there are three issues with the chain. The fourth narrator (Saʿīd) did *tadlis* a lot and also became confused. The question is: does his *tadlis* affect his narrations from Qatādah, especially as he has narrated in an *ʿan-ʿan* manner? Moreover, did the third narrator (Ibn Abī ʿAdī) hear from him before or during his confusion? Lastly, Qatādah himself was famous for *tadlis*. So, does his *tadlis* affect his *ʿan-ʿan* reports from Abū Ḥarb?

Some of these questions are answered in the following *isnad* documented by Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

حدثنا محمد بن بشار حدثنا يحيى وابن أبي عدي عن سعيد عن قتادة عن أنس بن مالك

Muḥammad b. Bashār – Yaḥyā and Ibn Abī ʿAdī – Saʿīd – Qatādah
– Anas b. Mālīk⁷⁶

Interestingly, this chain is almost identical to the one we are investigating! We see that Saʿīd has narrated *ʿan-ʿan* from Qatādah, and al-Bukhārī considers the *sanad* to be *ṣaḥīḥ*. This proves that Saʿīd's *tadlis* does not affect his *ʿan-ʿan* reports from Qatādah. It is noteworthy that Qatādah's *ʿan-ʿan* reports from Anas are also accepted as *ṣaḥīḥ*, as in the above chain.

⁷⁴ Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabḍīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-ʿIlmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā], vol. 2, p. 382, # 7073

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 356

⁷⁶ Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḡhīrah al-Bukhārī al-Jʿufī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 1, p. 349, # 984

In this *sanad* of al-Bukhārī, Ibn Abī ‘Adī is conjoined with Yahyā. However, in another chain in the same *Ṣaḥīḥ*, he stands alone:

حدثني محمد بن بشار حدثنا ابن أبي عدي عن سعيد عن قتادة عن أنس رضي الله

Muḥammad b. Bashār – Ibn Abī ‘Adī – Sa’īd – Qatādah – Anas b. Mālik⁷⁷

As such, Ibn Abī ‘Adī authentically transmitted from Sa’īd. He apparently narrated from the Sa’īd *before* the latter’s confusion. Moreover, this *isnād* reiterates the fact that Sa’īd’s ‘*an-‘an*’ reports from Qatādah are *ṣaḥīḥ*. In other words, his *tadlīs* does not affect them.

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) confirms all our words:

حدثنا ابن المثنى: ثنا ابن أبي عدي عن سعيد عن قتادة قلت: وهذا إسناد صحيح على شرط الشيخين.

Ibn al-Muthannā – **Ibn Abī ‘Adī – Sa’īd – Qatādah....** I (al-Albānī) say:
This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁷⁸

Imām Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 H) also records:

حدثنا محمد بن بشار و أبو موسى قالوا : حدثنا ابن أبي عدي عن سعيد عن قتادة
عن أبي تيمية عن الأشعري - يعني أبا موسى

Muḥammad b. Bashār and Abū Mūsā – Ibn Abī ‘Adī – Sa’īd – Qatādah – Abū Tamīmah – Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī.⁷⁹

Dr. Al-A’ẓamī declares:

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 3, p. 1309, # 3379

⁷⁸ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Abī Dāwūd* (Kuwait: Muasassat al-Gharās li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 1st edition, 1423 H), vol. 3, p. 417, # 782

⁷⁹ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muhammad Muṣṭafā al-A’ẓamī], vol. 3, p. 313, # 2154

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*⁸⁰

Needless to say, Ibn Khuzaymah also considers the *sanad* to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, and has therefore included it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

The bottom-line is as follows:

1. Ibn Abī ‘Adī authentically narrated from Sa‘īd, before the latter’s confusion.
2. The ‘*an-‘an*’ reports of Sa‘īd from Qatādah are *ṣaḥīḥ*. The former’s *tadlīs* does not affect them.
3. Some ‘*an-‘an*’ reports of Qatādah – like those from Anas and Abū Tamīmah – are also *ṣaḥīḥ*. Qatādah’s *tadlīs* has no effect on them.

The big question, at this point, is: what is the status of Qatādah’s ‘*an-‘an*’ narrations from Abū Ḥarb? According to high-ranking Sunni *muḥadithūn*, such narrations are *ṣaḥīḥ*. For instance, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī states:

حدثنا مسدد: نا يحيى عن ابن أبي عروبة عن قتادة عن أبي حَرَب
ابن أبي الأسود عن أبيه عن علي.

قلت: وهذا إسناده صحيح

Musaddad – Yaḥyā – (Sa‘īd) b. Abī ‘Arūbah – Qatādah – Abū Ḥarb
b. Abī al-Aswad – his father – ‘Alī.

I say: This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁸¹

This chain, like some others, is almost identical with that of the report from Ibn Abī Ḥātim. Here, the ‘Allāmah confirms that the ‘*an-‘an*’ reports of Sa‘īd from Qatādah are *ṣaḥīḥ*, as well as Qatādah’s ‘*an-‘an*’ narrations from Abū Ḥarb. Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ too backs him:

⁸⁰ *Ibid*

⁸¹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Abi Dawūd* (Kuwait: Muasassat al-Gharās li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 1st edition, 1423 H), vol. 2, p. 225, # 403

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا عبد الصمد بن عبد الوارث ثنا هشام عن قتادة عن
أبي حرب بن أبي الأسود عن أبيه عن علي رضي الله عنه إسناده صحيح على
شرط مسلم

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) - ‘Abd
al-Ṣamad b. ‘Abd al-Wārith – Hishām – **Qatādah – Abū Ḥarb b. Abī
al-Aswad – his father** – ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him.... Its
chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of Muslim.⁸²

Imām Abū Ya’lā further records:

حدثنا عبيد الله حدثنا معاذ بن هشام حدثني أبي عن قتادة عن أبي حرب بن
الأسود الديلي عن أبي الأسود عن علي بن أبي طالب

‘Ubayd Allāh – Mu’adh b. Hishām – my father – **Qatādah – Abū Ḥarb
b. al-Aswad al-Dūlī – Abū al-Aswad** – ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.⁸³

Shaykh Dr. Asad comments:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*⁸⁴

In a simple summary, the *athar* from Ibn Abī Ḥātim about how ‘Umar sentenced a woman to death for delivering the baby only after six months of pregnancy has an impeccably *ṣaḥīḥ* chain. All the narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), and the *sanad* is fully connected.

There are some serious substantive and procedural problems with the judgment of ‘Umar, which reveal a lot about him. He sentenced the woman to death by stoning. This suggests that he had convicted her of adultery. His only proof against her was that she delivered her baby only after six months

⁸² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūt], vol. 1, p. 76, # 563

⁸³ Abū Ya’lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 1, p. 261, # 307

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

of her known pregnancy. In the obviously invalid view of ‘Umar, a six-month pregnancy was absolutely impossible. As such, the woman *must have been* secretly pregnant before her husband started counting the days of her pregnancy – apparently, from the date of their last successful encounter (by his calculations). In other words, while her husband was having sexual intercourse with her (and most probably, it was their first time), she was already secretly pregnant for another man.

The Book of Allāh has laid down the procedural law in all cases of *ẓinā*:

والذين يرمون المحصنات ثم لم يأتوا بأربعة شهداء فاجلدوهم ثمانين جلدة ولا تقبلوا لهم
شهادة أبدا وأولئك هم الفاسقون

Those who accuse chaste women, **and do not produce four witnesses**, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever, **they indeed are the liars**.⁸⁵

So, in order to establish the charge of *ẓinā* against anyone, four witnesses who saw the crime *with their own eyes* must be called upon to testify. Without the production of those four witnesses, the accuser himself must be penalized, and declared an eternal liar whose future testimonies must always be rejected.

Was ‘Umar aware of the above verse? The answer is not clear. What is undeniable however is that he paid absolutely no attention to it. He never demanded the testimony of four eye-witnesses to support his charge of *ẓinā* against the woman. He simply convicted her based upon his mere *suspicion*. This singular incident casts a huge dark cloak over ‘Umar till the Hour.

Firstly, ‘Umar had wrongly convicted the woman of adultery *without evidence*. He never demanded or presented four witnesses to support his conviction (which in essence is also an accusation). Therefore, he himself deserved to be flogged with eighty stripes and declared a *persona non grata* within the Islāmic *Ummah*. The other persons who dragged the woman to him also needed to be investigated. If they too had accused her of *ẓinā* without calling four eye-witnesses to testify, then each of them must also be punished in the same manner as ‘Umar.

Secondly, let us assume that ‘Umar did not merely rely upon unfounded suspicion in convicting the woman. Rather, four eye-witnesses who saw her

⁸⁵ Qur’ān 24:4

in the middle of the adultery were summoned, and they testified. Therefore, she was indeed guilty and truly deserved the stoning penalty. Where then was her partner in the crime? What sentence did ‘Umar hand down upon him? If two people committed *zinā*, is it only the woman that can be punished? Are men supposed to go scotfree for their crimes of adultery? It is extremely strange that ‘Umar was itching to send the woman to her grave, without asking a single question about her accomplice!

6 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE III

The *khalīfah* of Muslims is their supreme judge on every aspect of their religion, like the Messenger of Allāh. As such, Muslims are required to refer all their religious problems and disputes to him for judgment, and his verdicts are binding over them. This function necessitates that the *khalīfah* be the most knowledgeable of the *Ummah* throughout his administration. Otherwise, he would be unfit for the grand office. Issuing correct religious verdicts on all types of religious questions and disputes, from all persons of all calibres, certainly requires unparalleled knowledge.

During his rule, a man came to ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb with his personal religious problem. Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records about how the *khalīfah* handled it:

حدثني عبد الله بن هاشم العبدي حدثنا يحيى (يعني ابن سعيد القطان) عن شعبة قال حدثني الحكم عن زر عن سعيد بن عبد الرحمن بن أبيزي عن أبيه أن رجلا أتى عمر فقال: إني أجنت فلم أجد ماء فقال لا تصل فقال عمار أما تذكر يا أمير المؤمنين إذ أنا وأنت في سرية فأجنبنا فلم نجد ماء فأما أنت فلم تصل وأما أنا فتمعكت في التراب وصليت فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إنما كان يكفيك أن تضرب بيدك الأرض ثم تنفخ ثم تمسح بهما وجهك وكفيك فقال عمر اتق الله يا عمار قال إن شئت لم أحدث به

‘Abd Allāh b. Hishām al-‘Abdī – Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭān – Shuʿbah – al-

Ḥakam – Dharr – Saʿīd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abza – his father:

A man came to ‘Umar and said: “I have seminal discharges and I cannot find water (to do the *ghuṣḥ*)”. He (‘Umar) said, “Do not perform *Ṣalāt*.” So, ‘Ammar said, “Do you remember, O *Amīr al-Mūminīn*, when I and you were in a military detachment and we had seminal discharges and could not find water and you (‘Umar) did not perform the *Ṣalāt*. As for me, I rolled myself in dust and performed the *Ṣalāt*. So, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, “It was enough for you to strike the soil with your hands and then blow and then wipe your face and palms”. Umar said: “Fear Allāh, O Ammār!” Therefore, he (‘Ammār) replied, “If you so like, I would not narrate it”.⁸⁶

There are some really interesting facts in this narration:

1. ‘Umar and Ammār, *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu*, were both together in a military detachment, and they had seminal discharges.
2. Ammār rolled himself in the soil in order to cleanse himself for *Ṣalāt*, due to a lack of water. He had no divine guidance for the act. It was only his intuition.
3. ‘Umar, on his part, completely refrained from offering any *Ṣalāt* as long as he could not find water.
4. Both recounted their experiences to the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālīhi*, who taught them *tayammum* as the correct step should they encounter a similar situation.
5. During ‘Umar’s rule, a man came to him with the same problem that he personally had gone through. But, rather than offer to him the solution of *tayammum* as taught by the Prophet, ‘Umar instructed the man with his own initial wrong step!
6. ‘Ammār attempted to remind ‘Umar of the Sunnah in such situations. But, the latter simply did not want to hear about it!

There are a number of questions here. First and foremost, did ‘Umar deliberately reject the Sunnah or not? This depends upon whether he actually remembered the incident involving him and ‘Ammār. If he did, and still gave the ruling that he gave, then he would have been contemptuous of the Sunnah. Moreover, even if he had completely forgotten it, why did he not act on ‘Ammār’s reminder? From the look of it, he was not convinced by ‘Ammār’s narration. He most probably had very serious doubts about

⁸⁶ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 1, p. 280, #112

the accuracy of ‘Ammār’s *ḥadīth*. Therefore, he saw no real reason to alter his decision on the matter.

So, the best-case scenario is that ‘Umar had absolutely forgotten the incident of *tayammum*, which involved him personally and directly. In addition, when ‘Ammār attempted to revive his memory of the event, he had grave trust issues with the latter’s report. Therefore, he did not remember, and there was no other reliable source to bring back his memories of the incident. The worst-case scenario is that ‘Umar actually remembered the *ḥadīth*, or was at least successfully reminded of it by ‘Ammār. Yet, he thought that his personal solution to the issue before him outweighed the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh. As such, he was in contempt of Muḥammad and his teachings.

We will go with the best-case scenario. ‘Umar had completely forgotten, and was not successfully reminded. This fact casts a mammoth shadow of doubt over ‘Umar’s memory power. Since he forgot the incident of *tayammum* so completely and absolutely, it is extremely uncertain that he was able to remember many – if not most – other teachings of the Prophet that were necessary in his discharge of his day-to-day judicial functions. The end result is that he lacked the requisite scholarly prowess for the office. The natural product of absolutely forgetting anything is complete ignorance of it.

Something that baffles the mind is how ‘Umar came to the conclusion that he could issue rulings in the *Shari’ah* with his *personal* opinions simply because he had forgotten, or did not know, the correct positions. Is ignorance an excuse for the adoption of personal opinions in the Law of Allāh? The Qur’ān answers:

ومن لم يحكم بما أنزل الله فأولئك هم الكافرون

Whosoever does NOT give rulings, verdicts, judgments, or commands based upon what Allāh has revealed, **such people are the infidels**.⁸⁷

Therefore, giving a ruling by personal opinion amounts to disbelief (*kufr*), according to Allāh. Why did ‘Umar take such an extreme risk? He should have simply remained silent, or sought the advice of superior jurists like Amīr al-Mūminīn, ‘*alaihi al-salām*, Ibn ‘Abbās, *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu*, and others. His reliance upon personal opinion in issuing a ruling in the *Shari’ah* of

⁸⁷ Qur’ān 5:44

Allāh was a *very* wrong step. It saved neither him, nor the man who came to him for judgment.

Perhaps, the most disturbing part is that the ruling of *tayammum* is explicitly stated at two different places in the Book of Allāh:

وإن كنتم مرضى أو على سفر أو جاء أحد منكم من الغائط أو لامستم النساء فلم تجدوا ماء فتيمموا صعيدا طيبا فامسحوا بوجوهكم وأيديكم

And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes after answering the call of nature, or you have had sexual intercourse with women **and you cannot find water, perform *tayammum* with clean soil** and rub therewith your faces and hands.⁸⁸

It is apparent. Despite the double presence of the ruling of *tayammum* in the Qur’ān, ‘Umar did NOT know it. This raises a blood-red flag on ‘Umar’s knowledge of the Book of Allāh. Obviously, he was not a *ḥāfiẓ* (memorizer) of the Qur’ān. Secondly, his knowledge of its verses, and of *al-Fiqh*, must have been extremely deficient, as *tayammum* is only one of the beginner’s courses in Islāmic jurisprudence!

‘Umar’s controversial judgment expectedly split the *Ummah*. There were his loyalists who thought that his clearly invalid ruling was more correct than the Qur’ān and Sunnah! There were also his opponents who sided with Allāh and His Messenger. One of the staunchest loyalists of ‘Umar was ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas’ūd, a very senior Ṣaḥābī. Imām Muslim records:

حدثنا يحيى بن يحيى وأبو بكر بن أبي شيبة وابن نمير جميعا عن أبي معاوية قال أبو بكر حدثنا أبو معاوية عن الأعمش عن شقيق قال كنت جالسا مع عبد الله وأبي موسى فقال أبو موسى ثم يا أبا عبد الرحمن أرأيت لو أن رجلا أجنب فلم يجد الماء شهرا كيف يصنع بالصلاة فقال عبد الله لا يتيمم وإن لم يجد الماء شهرا قال أبو موسى فكيف بهذه الآية في سورة المائدة فلم تجدوا ماء فتيمموا صعيدا طيبا فقال عبد الله لو رخص لهم في هذه الآية لأوشك إذا برد عليهم الماء أن يتيمموا بالصعيد فقال أبو موسى لعبد الله ألم تسمع قول عمار بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في حاجة فأجنب فلم أجد الماء فتمرغت في الصعيد كما تمرغ الدابة ثم أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فذكرت ذلك له فقال إنما كان يكفيك أن تقول بيديك هكذا ثم ضرب

⁸⁸ Qur’ān 4:43 and 5:6

بيديه الأرض حصول واحدة ثم مسح الشمال على اليمين وظاهر كفيه ووجهه فقال
عبد الله أو لم تر عمر لم يقنع بقول عمار

Yahyā b. Yahyā, Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybah and Ibn Numayr – Abū Mu’āwiyah – al-A’mash – Shaqīq:

I was sitting with ‘Abd Allāh (b. Mas’ūd) and Abū Mūsā (al-Ash’arī). So, Abū Mūsā asked: “O Abū ‘Abd al-Rahman, what is your opinion: if a man had a seminal discharge and could not find water for one month, how should he do about the *Ṣalāt*? ‘Abd Allāh replied, “**He should NOT perform *tayammum* even if he cannot find water for a month**”.

Abū Mūsā then said, “**What about this verse in Sūrat al-Māidah said, ‘And you cannot find water, then perform *tayammum* with clean soil’?**” ‘Abd Allāh replied, “If they were allowed on the basis of this verse, there is a possibility that they would perform *tayammum* with soil even if water were available but cold.” So, Abū Mūsā said to ‘Abd Allāh, “Have you not heard the statement of ‘Ammār: ‘The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, sent me on an errand and I had a seminal discharge, but could not find water. So I rolled myself in the soil just as a beast rolls itself. Then, I came to the Prophet, peace be upon him then and mentioned that to him and he (the Messenger) said: “It would have been enough for you to do thus”. Then he struck the earth with his hands once and wiped his right hand with the help of his left hand and the exterior of his palms and his face’.” ‘Abd Allāh replied: “**Didn't you see that ‘Umar was NOT satisfied with the statement of ‘Ammār?**”⁸⁹

Abū Mūsā was on the side of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, and sought to correct Ibn Mas’ūd on his diehard ‘Umarist stance on *tayammum*. The former quoted the Book of Allāh and the explicit teaching of His Messenger. Ibn Mas’ūd however rejected both, citing excuses. He could not allow the people to follow the Qur’ān, because there was a “possibility” that they would abuse its ruling. Well, this same logic could be employed to turn down *everything* that Islām teaches! Moreover, Ibn Mas’ūd equally refused the Sunnah of the Prophet only because ‘Umar was not satisfied with ‘Ammār’s *ḥadīth*!

⁸⁹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 1, p. 280, #110

7 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE IV

Tayammum was not the only topic in Islāmic jurisprudence that ‘Umar had great difficulty grasping. There were many others, even according to his own confessions. We will be briefly examining a few examples and their implications.

Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) opens the discussion:

حدثنا أحمد بن أبي رجاء حدثنا يحيى عن أبي حيان التميمي عن الشعبي عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما قال: خطب عمر على منبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال إنه قد نزل تحريم الخمر وهي من خمسة أشياء العنب والتمر والحنطة والشعير والعسل والخمر ما خامر العقل . وثلاث وددت أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لم يفارقنا حتى يعهد إلينا عهدا الجذ والكلالة وأبواب من أبواب الربا

Aḥmad b. Abī Rajāh – Yaḥyā – Abū Ḥayyān al-Tamīmī – Shu’bī – Ibn ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with them both:

‘Umar delivered a sermon on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying, “Verily, there was revealed an order making alcohol *ḥaram*, and it is made from five things: grape, date, wheat, barley and honey. Alcohol is whatsoever clouds the mind. **I wish the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, had not left us before he could explain three matters to us: the inheritance of the grandfather,**

kalālah and various types of *ribā* (usury).⁹⁰

Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records too:

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا علي بن مسهر عن أبي حيان عن الشعبي عن ابن عمر قال: خطب عمر على منبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فحمد الله وأثنى عليه ثم قال أما بعد ألا وإن الحمر نزل تحريمها يوم نزل وهي من خمسة أشياء من الحنطة والشعير والتمر والزبيب والعسل والحمر ما خامر العقل وثلاثة أشياء وددت أيها الناس أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان عهد إلينا فيها الجدة والكلافة وأبواب من أبواب الربا

Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybah – ‘Alī b. Mas-har – Abū Ḥayyān – al-Sha’bī – Ibn ‘Umar:

‘Umar delivered a sermon on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. He thanked Allāh and praised him. Then he said, “Now, coming to the point: verily, there was revealed an order making alcohol *ḥarām* on the day it was revealed. It is made from five things: wheat, barley, date, raisin and honey. Alcohol is anything which clouds the intellect. **There are three matters, O people, that I wish the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, had explained to us: inheritance of the grandfather, *kalālah* and various types of *ribā* (usury).**⁹¹

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) documents too:

وأخبرنا علي بن محمد بن عقبة ثنا الهيثم بن خالد ثنا أبو نعيم ثنا سفيان عن عمرو بن مرة عن مرة عن عمر رضي الله عنه قال ثلاث لأن يكون النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بينهم لنا أحب إلي من الدنيا وما فيها الخلافة والكلافة والربا

‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqbah – al-Haytham b. Khālid – Abū Na’īm – Sufyān – ‘Amr b. Marrah – Marrah – ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with

⁹⁰ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā’il b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 5, p. 2122, # 5266

⁹¹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 2322, # 32 (3032)

him:

“There are three matters. **Had the Prophet, peace be upon him, clearly explained them to us**, that would have been more beloved to me than this world and whatsoever is in it: **the *khilāfah* (caliphate), *kalālah* and *ribā* (usury)**”.⁹²

Al-Ḥākim says:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs⁹³

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) agrees:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim⁹⁴

Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H) has an even clearer report:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى عن بن أبي عروبة ثنا قتادة عن سعيد بن المسيب قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: إن آخر ما نزل من القرآن آية الربا وإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قبض ولم يفسرها فدعوا الربا والريبة

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yahyā – Ibn Abī ‘Arūbah – Qatādah – Sa’d b. al-Musayyab:

‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “Verily, the last of what was revealed in the Qur’ān was the Verse of *Ribā*. **And verily, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, died and never explained it.** Therefore, avoid *ribā* and doubt.”⁹⁵

⁹² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 2, p. 333, # 3188

⁹³ *Ibid*

⁹⁴ *Ibid*

⁹⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūt], vol. 1, p. 36, # 246

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ comments:

حسن رجاله ثقات رجال الشيخين

It is *ḥasan*. Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), narrators of the two Shaykhs.⁹⁶

Apparently, ‘Umar did not know the Islāmic rulings and teachings concerning the inheritance of the grandfather (from his grandchild), *kaalālah*, usury (*ribā*) and the *khalāfah*. He therefore placed the blame on the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alīhi*, and accused him of never explaining them to his *Ummah*. His allegations however directly contradict these verses:

وما على الرسول إلا البلاغ المبين

The duty of the Messenger is **only to convey in a clear way**.⁹⁷

وأنزلنا إليك الذكر لتبين للناس ما نزل إليهم

And We have sent down unto you (Muḥammad) *al-Dhikr* (i.e. the Qur’ān) **that you may explain clearly to mankind what is sent down to them**.⁹⁸

Therefore, if the Prophet had not explained clearly a single item of his *risalah*, he would have failed in his mission. Allāh however testifies in favour of His Messenger, that he actually conveyed and explained everything clearly to the *Ummah*. This was why He declared the religion completed and perfect:

اليوم أكملت لكم دينكم وأتممت عليكم نعمتي ورضيت لكم الإسلام ديناً

This Day, **I have perfected your religion for you**, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islām as your religion.⁹⁹

This is an unmistakable testimony that the Messenger did explain

⁹⁶ *Ibid*

⁹⁷ Qur’ān 24:54

⁹⁸ Qur’ān 16:44

⁹⁹ Qur’ān 5:3

everything in a clear, explicit and simple manner to his followers. He successfully fulfilled his mission. It was ‘Umar that had once again forgotten completely that the Messenger performed his duty.

One then wonders how ‘Umar handled questions and disputes regarding the inheritance of the grandfather, *kalālah*, usury and the *khilāfah* that were brought to his court. He either relied upon his personal opinion – as in the case of *tayammum* – or rather guessed and gambled in his judgments. Another possibility was that he would refer those issues to superior jurists among the Ṣaḥābah, *raḍīyallāh ‘anhum*, for help. In all cases, his competency as even an ordinary judge falls into serious doubt. It gets really worse when one considers that ‘Umar was the sovereign judge, and that there was no right of appeal against his rulings and judgments.

Of the four subjects, ‘Umar had particular difficulty in grasping *kalālah*. He never understood it till his death. So, we will flash light upon it, as this situation reveals some more information about him. Imām Muslim records:

حدثنا محمد بن أبي بكر المديني ومحمد بن المثنى (واللفظ لابن المثنى) قال حدثنا يحيى بن سعيد حدثنا هشام حدثنا قتادة عن سالم بن أبي الجعد عن معدان بن أبي طلحة أن عمر بن الخطاب خطب يوم الجمعة فذكر نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وذكر أبا بكر ثم قال إني لا أدع بعدي شيئاً أهم من الكلالة ما راجعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في شيء ما راجعته في الكلالة وما أغلظ لي في شيء ما أغلظ لي فيه حتى طعن بأصبعه في صدري وقال يا عمر ألا تكفيك آية الصيف التي في آخر سورة النساء ؟ وإني إن أعش أقض فيها بقضية يقضي بها من يقرأ القرآن ومن لا يقرأ القرآن

Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Muqaddamī and Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā – Yahyā b. Sa’īd – Hishām – Qatādah – Sālīm b. Abī al-Ja’d – Ma’dān b. Abī Ṭalḥah:

‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb delivered a sermon on Friday and mentioned the Prophet of Allāh, peace be upon him, and also mentioned Abū Bakr. Then he said, “I do not abandon behind me anything more important than *kalālah*. **I did not refer to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, concerning anything as I referred to him concerning *kalālah*. And he was never as harsh to me concerning anything as he was harsh to me about it,** so much that he struck my chest with his fingers and said, “O ‘Umar, is the *Verse of the Summer*, which is at

the end of *Sūrat al-Nisā*, not sufficient for you?” If I (‘Umar) lived longer, I would give judge concerning it (i.e. *kalālah*) with a judgment that would be the precedent for all future judgments concerning it by those who could read the Qur’ān and those who could not read the Qur’ān.”¹⁰⁰

Imām Aḥmad again documents:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا إسماعيل عن سعيد بن أبي عروبة عن قتادة عن سالم بن أبي الجعد عن معدان بن أبي طلحة قال قال عمر رضي الله عنه: ما سألت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن شيء أكثر مما سألته عن الكلالة حتى طعن بأصبعه في صدري وقال تكفيك آية الصيف التي في آخر سورة النساء

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Ismā’īl – Sa’īd b. Abī ‘Arūbah – Qatādah – Sālim b. Abī al-Ja’d – Ma’dān b. Abī Ṭalḥah:

‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: **“I never asked the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, about anything more (repeatedly) than I asked him about *kalālah*** so much that he struck my chest with his fingers and said, “O ‘Umar, is the *Verse of the Summer*, which is at the end of *Sūrat al-Nisā*, not sufficient for you?”¹⁰¹

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط مسلم رجاله ثقات

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of Muslim. Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy).¹⁰²

So, ‘Umar’s most difficult topic was *kalālah*. Although he was basically clueless about the other topics as well, *kalālah* proved the most stubborn of them to him. He repeatedly questioned the Messenger of Allāh about it. It was the Prophet’s job to explain things clearly to him each time, and we

¹⁰⁰ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1236, # 9 (1617)

¹⁰¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 1, p. 26, # 179

¹⁰² *Ibid*

believe he did that each time ‘Umar came to him. In the end, the Messenger got frustrated and baffled by ‘Umar’s inability to comprehend a fairly straightforward topic like *kalālah*, even after several explanations! What exactly is so difficult about it? Moreover, the Prophet thought that there was a verse about *kalālah* at the end of *Sūrat al-Nisā*, which was fully self-explanatory and ordinarily should be sufficient for anyone without further commentary¹⁰³. Why was ‘Umar still unable to grasp it, despite the verse and the repeated explanations?

Surprisingly, ‘Umar apparently read the *Verse of the Summer* (before or after the Messenger of Allāh referred him to it) but could not understand its simple rules. Worse still, the Prophet repeatedly explained it to him, and he nonetheless did not get it! This raises some grave concerns about ‘Umar’s comprehension skills. It also apparently reveals why the Messenger became frustrated and harsh with him.

Does justice dispensation require very high comprehension skills on the part of the judge? We leave the answer to our esteemed reader.

¹⁰³ It is Qur’ān 4:176, usually read together with Qur’ān 4:12. Both are about *kalālah*. Meanwhile, the first is generally believed, among the Ahl al-Sunnah, to be about full siblings, while the latter concerns maternal siblings.

8 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE V

As the chief law enforcement officer of the *Ummah*, the *khalifah* has the authority to arrest and prosecute anyone who commits an offence in his presence. There is no requirement anywhere that the crime must be reported to him by someone else before he could arrest and prosecute. Imām ‘Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211 H) records an instance where ‘Umar, as the *khalifah*, invoked this authority:

أخبرنا عبد الرزاق قال: أخبرنا عبيد الله بن عمر عن نافع عن صفية ابنة أبي عبيد .
ومعمر عن نافع عن صفية قالت: وجد عمر في بيت رجل من ثقيف خمرًا، وقد كان
جلده في الحمر فحرق بيته، وقال: ما اسمك؟ قال: رويشد، . قال: بل أنت فويسق

‘Abd al-Razzāq – ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Umar AND Ma’mar – Nāfi’ –
Safīyah b. Abī ‘Ubayd:

‘Umar discovered alcohol in the house of a man from (the tribe of) Thaqīf. He (the man) had already been lashed for alcohol consumption in the past. **Therefore, he (‘Umar) burnt his house**, and asked, “What is your name?” He (the man) replied, “Ruwayshid.” He (‘Umar) retorted, “Rather, you are *Fuwaysiq* (an abusive word)”.¹⁰⁴

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) states about the first narrator:

¹⁰⁴ Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hamām al-Ṣa’nānī, *al-Muṣannaḥ* [annotator: Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-A’ẓamī], vol. 6, p. 77, # 10051

عبد الرزاق بن همام بن نافع الحميري مولاهم أبو بكر الصنعاني ثقة حافظ

‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām b. Nāfi’ al-Ḥumayrī, their freed slave, Abū Bakr al-Ṣan’ānī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **ḥāfiẓ** (a **ḥadīth** scientist).¹⁰⁵

There are two second narrators. So, this is what al-Ḥāfiẓ has to say about *Second Narrator A*:

عبيد الله بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب العمري المدني أبو عثمان
ثقة ثبت

‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Umar b. Ḥafs b. ‘Āṣim b. ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb al-‘Umarī al-Madanī, Abū ‘Uthmān: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **thabt** (accurate).¹⁰⁶

He also says about *Second Narrator B*:

معمر بن راشد الأزدي مولاهم أبو عروة البصري نزيل اليمن ثقة ثبت فاضل

Ma‘mar b. Rāshid al-Azdī, their freed slave, Abū ‘Urwah al-Baṣrī, he lived in Yemen: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **thabt** (accurate), **fāḍil** (meritorious).¹⁰⁷

Both second narrators transmitted from Nāfi’, about whom al-Ḥāfiẓ states:

نافع أبو عبد الله المدني مولى ابن عمر ثقة ثبت فقيه مشهور

Nāfi’, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī, freed slave of Ibn ‘Umar: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **thabt** (accurate), a well-known jurist.¹⁰⁸

Al-Ḥāfiẓ seals it with these comments about the last narrator:

صفية بنت أبي عبيد بن مسعود التقيية زوج بن عمر قيل لها إدراك وأكركه الدارقطني

¹⁰⁵ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Taḥdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 599, # 4078

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 637, # 4340

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 202, # 6833

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 239, # 7111

وقال العجلي ثقة

Şafīyyah b. Abī ‘Ubayd b. Mas’ūd al-Thaqafīyyah, the wife of Ibn ‘Umar. It is said that she met the Prophet, but al-Daraqutnī denies that. Al-‘Ijlī said: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**.¹⁰⁹

Şafīyyah is also a narrator of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.¹¹⁰

In summary, the above chain is impeccably *ṣaḥīḥ*. Elsewhere, ‘Abd al-Razzāq has recorded the exact same report with this chain:

أخبرنا عبد الرزاق قال: أخبرنا معمر عن أيوب عن نافع عن صفية

‘Abd al-Razzāk – Ma’mar – **Ayūb** – Nāfi’ - Şafīyyah¹¹¹

The only new name is Ayūb. So, who is he? Al-Ḥāfiẓ answers:

أيوب بن أبي تميمة جلس السخيتاني أبو بكر البصري ثقة ثبت حجة من كبار
الفقهاء العباد

Ayūb b. Abī Tamīm al-Sakhtayānī, Abū Bakr al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah (trustworthy), thabt (accurate), ḥujjah (an authority in ḥadīth)**, from the greatest jurists and worshippers of Allāh.¹¹²

In other words, the *athar* about ‘Umar is doubly *ṣaḥīḥ*!

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) also has some further words:

روى الدولابي في الكنى " (1 / 189) عن إبراهيم بن عبد الرحمن بن عوف قال:
رأيت عمر أحرق بيت رويشد الثقفي حتى كأنه جمرة أو حمة وكان جارنا يبيع الخمر.
وسنده صحيح. ورواه عبد الرزاق عن صفية بنت أبي عبيد كما في " الجامع الكبيرة "

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 647, # 8669

¹¹⁰ See for instance Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 2, p. 1126, # 1490 (63-64)

¹¹¹ Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hamām al-Ṣa’nānī, *al-Muṣannaf* [annotator: Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-A’ẓamī], vol. 9, p. 230, # 17036

¹¹² *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 116, # 606

(3 / 204 / 1) وأبو عبيد في " الأموال " (ص 103) عن ابن عمر وسنده صحيح أيضا

Al-Dawlābī reported in *al-Kunī* (1/189) on the authority Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Awf that he said: “I saw ‘Umar burning the house of Ruwayshid al-Thaqafī until it became like firebrand or a hot spring. **He was our neighbour who sold alcohol.**” Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.

‘Abd al-Razzāq also narrated on the authority of Ṣafīyyah bint Abī ‘Ubayd, as stated in *al-Jāmi’ al-Kabīrah* (3/204/1) as well as Abū ‘Ubayd in *al-Ammāl* (p. 103) on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar, **and its chain is ṣaḥīḥ too.**¹¹³

Interestingly, this Ruwayshid was one of the Ṣaḥābah! Al-Ḥāfiẓ states:

رويشد الثقفني أبو علاج الطائفي ثم المدني له إدراك وله قصة مع عمر بسبب بيعه الشراب قال بن أبي ذئب أنا سعد بن إبراهيم بن عبد الرحمن بن عوف عن أبيه أن عمر أمر باحراق بيت رويشد وكان يبيع فيه الشراب فنهاه عمر فلم ينته

Ruwayshid al-Thaqafī, Abū ‘Alāj al-Tāifī al-Madanī: **He met the Prophet. He also had a story with ‘Umar due to his selling of alcoholic drinks.** Ibn Abī Dhaib said: Sa’d b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Awf narrated to us from his father that ‘Umar ordered that the house of Ruwayshid be burnt down. **He used to sell alcoholic drinks in it. ‘Umar had warned him to desist, but he never desisted.**¹¹⁴

Elsewhere, he reiterates:

رويشد الثقفني وله قصة مع عمر في شربه الخمر وإنما ذكرته في الصحابة لأن من كان بتلك السن في عهد عمر يكون في زمن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مميّزا لا محالة ولم يبق من قريش وثقيف أحد إلا أسلم وشهد حجة الوداع مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

¹¹³ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Taḥẓir al-Sajid min Itikbāḥ al-Qubūr Masajid* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 4th edition). p. 49, footnote # 47

¹¹⁴ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Ta’jil Munfa’at bi Zawāid Rijāl al-Aimah al-Arba’at* (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāir; 1st edition, 1996 CE) [annotator: Dr. Ikrām Allāh Imdād al-Ḥaq], vol. 1, p. 539, # 328

Ruwayshid ... al-Thaqafi.... He had a story with ‘Umar concerning his consumption of alcohol.... **I have mentioned him among the Ṣaḥābah** only because whosoever was of that age (as Ruwayshid) during the time of ‘Umar must certainly have been matured during the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him. Also, there was no one from the tribes of Quraysh and Thaqīf except that he had accepted Islām and had witnessed the Farewell *Hajj* with the Prophet, peace be upon him.¹¹⁵

To summarize:

1. Ruwayshid was one of the Ṣaḥābah of the Prophet, from the tribe of Thaqīf.
2. He accepted Islām during the Prophet’s lifetime, met the latter, and did the Farewell *Hajj* with him.
3. During the rule of ‘Umar, Ruwayshid was convicted for alcohol consumption and punished.
4. However, after his conviction and punishment, Ruwayshid went ahead to sell alcohol in his house.
5. ‘Umar warned him to desist from selling alcohol, but he refused to stop.
6. So, ‘Umar burnt his house where he was selling the alcohol.

The story of Ruwayshid flies in the face of repeated Sunnī claims about the piety and righteousness of all the Ṣaḥābah!

It is a bit unclear on what ground ‘Umar burned Ruwayshid’s home. Was it to punish him for selling alcohol? Or, was it only an effort to disable him from further trading in alcohol?

One scenario is that the house-burning was inflicted as a judicial punishment. In other words, Ruwayshid was summarily tried, convicted and penalized for trading in alcohol. ‘Umar’ judicial sentence was that his house should be burnt to ashes. However, where did ‘Umar get that idea from? Was it from the Qur’ān? Was it from the Sunnah? Imām Muslim records the standard procedure in a case like this:

حدثنا أحمد بن عيسى حدثنا ابن وهب أخبرني عمرو عن بكير بن الأشج قال بينا نحن عند سليمان بن يسار إذ جاءه عبدالرحمن بن جابر حدثه فأقبل علينا سليمان فقال

¹¹⁵ Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyiz al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl; 1412 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad Bajāwī], vol. 2, p. 500, # 2699

حدثني عبدالرحمن ابن جابر عن أبيه عن أبي بردة الأنصاري: أنه سمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول لا يجلد أحد فوق عشرة أسواط إلا في حد من حدود الله

Aḥmad b. ‘Īsā – Ibn Wahb – ‘Amr – Bukayr b. al-Ashja’ Sulaymān b. Yasār – ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Jābir – his father – Abū Bardah al-Anṣārī:

I heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying: “None is to be given more than ten strokes of the cane (in punishment) except in the case of punishments immutably fixed by Allāh.”¹¹⁶

So, the question is whether Allāh has immutably fixed the punishment for alcohol sales business or not. Without an iota of doubt, there is no such fixed penalty for it. Therefore, the maximum sentence that can be inflicted upon an alcohol seller is ten lashes. Apparently, ‘Umar did not follow the instructions of Allāh in this regard. This brought him face-to-face against this verse:

ومن لم يحكم بما أنزل الله فأولئك هم الكافرون

Whosoever does NOT give rulings, verdicts, judgments, or commands based upon what Allāh has revealed, **such people are the infidels**.¹¹⁷

Another scenario is that ‘Umar actually burnt the house down only to forcefully put Ruwayshid out of business, without any intention to touch the latter himself personally for breaking the law. This theory is further strengthened by the fact that ‘Umar had earlier warned Ruwayshid to desist (thereby confirming his full knowledge of the alcohol trade). However, he made no effort whatsoever to arrest or prosecute him. When the latter would not listen to him, he burnt down his house – which also served as his brewery and alcohol store – solely to shut down his business. Normally, a caring government closes or destroys illegal ventures within its control. This is usually to protect the public. In addition to that, the same government proceeds to prosecute the owner of the illegal business for his crime. In the case of Ruwayshid, ‘Umar merely burnt his alcohol store, but allowed him to go scotfree!

¹¹⁶ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1332, #1708 (40)

¹¹⁷ Qur’ān 5:44

A baffling twist to this whole saga is that when another Ṣaḥābī was discovered, also engaging in alcohol business, ‘Umar simply let him be! He did not arrest him. He did not prosecute him. He did not burn his house! Imām Muslim records:

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة وزهير بن حرب وإسحاق بن إبراهيم (واللفظ لأبي بكر)
قالوا حدثنا سفيان بن عيينة عن عمرو عن طاوس عن ابن عباس قال: بلغ عمر أن
سمرة باع خمرًا فقال قاتل الله سمرة ألم يعلم أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال
لعن الله اليهود حرمت عليهم الشحوم فجمعوها فباعوها

Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybah, Zuhayr b. Ḥarb and Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm –
Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah – ‘Amr – Ṭāwūs – Ibn ‘Abbās:

‘Umar was informed that **Samrah sold alcohol**. So, he said, “May Allāh curse Samrah! Does he not know that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: ‘May Allāh curse the Jews. The fat of animals was made *ḥarām* for them. But they melt it and sold it.”¹¹⁸

Imām Abū Ya’lā (d. 307 H) also documents:

حدثنا أبو خيثمة و أبو سعيد قالوا : حدثنا سفيان بن عيينة عن عمرو عن طاووس
عن ابن عباس قال : باع سمرة خمرًا فقال عمر : قاتل الله سمرة ألم يعلم أن رسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : لعن الله لليهود حرمت عليهم الشحوم فباعوها واككلوا
أثمانها ؟

Abū Khaythamah and Abū Sa’īd – Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah – ‘Amr – Ṭāwūs
– Ibn ‘Abbās:

Samrah sold alcohol. So, ‘Umar said, “May Allāh curse Samrah! Does he not know that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, ‘May Allāh curse the Jews. The fat of animals was made *ḥarām* for them. So, they sold it and ate its price.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1207, #1582 (72)

¹¹⁹ Abū Ya’lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 1, p. 178, # 200

Shaykh Dr. Asad comments:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥiḥ*¹²⁰

Samrah was a prominent Ṣaḥābī. He too traded in alcohol. But, what was ‘Umar’s response? He merely cursed him *by name*, and that was it! There was no arrest, and no prosecution! Samrah’s house was equally left intact.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*

9 HADĪTH AL-QADĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE VI

Injustice begins the moment a judge begins to show bias towards or against any of the parties before him in any judicial proceedings. He *must* be completely impartial throughout, and this *must* be evident in his ruling. The Qur'ān commands:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا كونوا قوامين بالقسط شهداء لله ولو على أنفسكم أو الوالدين والأقربين إن يكن غنيا أو فقيرا فالله أولى بها فلا تتبعوا الهوى أن تعدلوا وإن تلووا أو تعرضوا فإن الله كان بما تعملون خبيرا

O you who believe! **Stand up firmly for justice**, as witnesses to Allāh, **even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor**, Allāh is more entitled to both (than you). **So follow not whims, lest you may avoid justice**. And if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily Allāh is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.¹²¹

During the rule of 'Umar, a terribly messy case was brought before him involving one of his close friends. Let us see how he handled it. Imām al-Ṭahāwī (d. 321 H) records:

حدثنا علي بن عبد الرحمن قال ثنا عفان بن مسلم وسعيد بن أبي مريم قالا حدثنا

¹²¹ Qur'ān 4:135

السري بن يحيى قال ثنا عبد الكريم بن رشيد عن أبي عثمان النهدي قال: جاء رجل إلى عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه فشهد على المغيرة بن شعبة فتغير لون عمر ثم جاء آخر فشهد فتغير لون عمر ثم جاء آخر فشهد فتغير لون عمر حتى عرفنا ذلك فيه وأنكر لذلك وجاء آخر يحرك يديه فقال ما عندك يا سلخ العقاب وصاح أبو عثمان صيحة تشبه بها صيحة عمر حتى كريت أن يغشى علي قال رأيت أمرا قبيحا قال الحمد لله الذي لم يشمت الشيطان بأمة محمد فأمر بأولئك النفر فجلدوا

‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman – ‘Affān b. Muslim and Sa‘īd b. Abī Maryam – al-Sarī b. Yaḥyā – ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Rashīd – Abū ‘Uthmān al-Hindī:

A man went to ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, and testified against al-Mughīrah b. Shu‘bah. So the colour of ‘Umar changed. Then, another man came and testified. Therefore, the colour of ‘Umar changed (further). Then, another man came and testified. **As a result the colour of ‘Umar changed (even further) such that we recognized that in him, and he denied (the charge without investigation) due to that.** Lastly, another man came, demonstrating with his hands. So, he (‘Umar) said, “What do you have (to say), O remover of the punishment!” Abū ‘Uthmān (the sub-narrator) then shouted to imitate the shout of ‘Umar, such that I (‘Abd al-Karīm) was agonized to the point of fainting. He (the fourth man) said, **“I saw a disgusting affair.”** He (‘Umar) said, “All praise be to Allāh Who did not allow Shayṭān to rejoice at the misfortune of the *Ummah* of Muḥammad.” So, he (‘Umar) ordered that those men be whipped (for allegedly lying against al-Mughīrah).¹²²

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) has copied it into his *al-Irwā*, and states about it:

قلت: وإسناد صحيح

I say: Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.¹²³

Imām al-Haythamī (d. 807 H) records further:

¹²² Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Salāmah b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Salamah, *Sharḥ Ma‘āni al-Athār* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1399 H) [annotator: Muḥammad Zuhri al-Najjār], vol. 4, p. 153, # 5677

¹²³ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Irwā al-Ghālil fī Takhrīj Aḥādīth Manār al-Sabīl* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1405 H), vol. 8, p. 28, # 2361

وعن أبي عثمان النهدي قال : شهد أبو بكره ونافع وشبل بن معبد على المغيرة بن شعبة أنهم نظروا إليه كما نظروا إلى المروء في المكحلة فجاء زياد فقال عمر : جاء رجل لا يشهد إلا بحق فقال : رأيت منظرا قبيحا وابتهارا قال : فجلدهم عمر الحد

Narrated Abū ‘Uthmān al-Hindī:

Abū Bakrah, Nāfi’ and Shibl b. Ma’bad testified against al-Mughīrah b. Shu’bah, that they saw it (i.e. the adultery), **as they saw the kohl stick (i.e. the male private organ of al-Mughīrah) inside the kohl container (i.e. the female private organ of the woman).** But Ziyād came, and ‘Umar said, “Here comes a man who will not testify except with the truth.” So, he (Ziyād) said, **“I saw a disgusting scene, and a spectacle.”** So, ‘Umar punished them with lashing.¹²⁴

Al-Haythamī declares:

رواه الطبراني ورجاله رجال الصحيح

Al-Ṭabarānī records it, **and its narrators are narrators of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.**¹²⁵

Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235 H) also records:

حدثنا أبو بكر قال حدثنا أبو أسامة عن عوف عن قسامة بن زهير قال : لما كان من شأن أبي بكره والمغيرة بن شعبة الذي كان، قال أبو بكره : اجتنب أو تنح عن صلاتنا، فإننا لا نصلي خلفك، قال : فكتب إلى عمر في شأنه، قال : فكتب عمر إلى المغيرة : أما بعد، فإنه قد رقي إلي من حديثك حديثا، فإن يكن مصدوقا عليك فلان يكون مت قبل اليوم خير لك، قال : فكتب إليه وإلى الشهود أن يقبلوا إليه، فلما انتهوا إليه دعا الشهود، فشهدوا، فشهد أبو بكره وشبل بن معبد وأبو عبد الله نافع، فقال عمر حين شهد هؤلاء الثلاثة : أود المغيرة أربعة، وشق على عمر شأنه جدا، فلما قام زياد قال : إن تشهد إن شاء الله إلا بحق، ثم شهد قال : أما الزنا فلا أشهد به، ولكني رأيت أمرا قبيحا، فقال عمر : اللهم اكبر، حدوهم، فجلدوهم، فلما فرغ من جلد أبي بكره قام أبو بكره فقال : أشهد أنه زان، فهم عمر أن يعيد عليه الحد،

¹²⁴ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 6, p. 434, # 10687

¹²⁵ *Ibid*

فقال علي: إن جلدته فارجم صاحبك، فتركه فلم يجلد، فما قذف مرتين بعد.

Abū Bakr – Abū Usāmah – ‘Awf – Qasāmah b. Zuhayr:

When the issue between Abū Bakrah and al-Mughīrah b. Shu’bah occurred, Abū Bakrah said, “Desist from or give up concerning our *Ṣalāt*, because we will not pray behind you.” So, he (al-Mughīrah) wrote to ‘Umar about his affair. Therefore, ‘Umar (too) wrote back to al-Mughīrah thus: “To begin, an act of yours has been reported to me. If such-and-such (i.e. Abū Bakrah) is corroborated against you, it would have been better for you to have died before this day.” So, he (‘Umar) wrote to him and the witnesses to come to him. When they got to him, they testified, and Abū Bakrah, Shibl b. Ma’bad, and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Nāfi’ testified. As such, ‘Umar said when these three people testified, “Four (people) oppressed al-Mughīrah.” **His matter was very unbearable for ‘Umar.** So, when Ziyād stood to testify, he (‘Umar) said, “You will testify with the truth, Allāh willing.” Then he (Ziyād) testified, saying, “As for adultery, I do not testify in favour of it. **However, I saw a disgusting affair.**” As a result, ‘Umar said, “*Allāh Akbar!* Punish them!” So, they (the first three witnesses) were lashed. After Abū Bakrah had been beaten, he stood up and said, “I testify that he (al-Mughīrah) committed adultery”. So, ‘Umar was about to repeat the punishment upon him. But, ‘Alī said, “If you lash him (again), then you must stone your companion (i.e. al-Mughīrah).” Due to this, he (‘Umar) left him, and did not beat him. Thus, he (Abū Bakrah) did not falsely accuse anyone of adultery again after that.¹²⁶

‘Allāmah al-Albānī has this comment about this exact report:

أخرجه ابن أبي شيبة وعنه البيهقي (334/8 - 335). قلت: وإسناده صحيح.

It is documented by Ibn Abī Shaybah, and from him bu al-Bayhaqī (8/334-335). I say: **Its chain is ṣaḥīḥ.**¹²⁷

Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah again documents:

¹²⁶ ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Abī Shaybah Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Bakr b. Abī Shaybah al-Kūfī al-‘Ubsī, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah fī al-Aḥādīth wa al-Athār* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1409 H) [annotator: Prof. Sa’īd al-Laḥām], vol. 6, P. 560, # 3

¹²⁷ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Irvā’ al-Ghālil fī Takhrīj Aḥādīth Manār al-Sabīl* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1405 H), vol. 8, p. 29, # 2361

حدثنا أبو بكر قال حدثنا ابن علية عن التيمي عن أبي عثمان قال: لما قدم أبو بكره وصاحبه على المغيرة جاء زياد فقال له عمر: رجل لن يشهد إن شاء الله إلا بحق، قال: رأيت انبهارا ومجلسا سيئا فقال عمر: هل رأيت المروء دخل المكحلة، قال: لا، قال: فأمر بهم فجلدوا.

Abū Bakr – Ibn ‘Ilyah – al-Tamīmī – Abū ‘Uthmān:

After Abū Bakrah and his two companions had testified against al-Mughīrah, Ziyād came. So, ‘Umar said, “He is a man who will never testify, Allāh willing, except with the truth.” He (Ziyād) said, “I saw a spectacle and an evil assembly”. So, ‘Umar said, “Did you see the kohl stick (i.e. the male private organ of al-Mughīrah) enter the kohl container (i.e. the female private organ of the woman)?” He (Ziyād) replied, “No.” Therefore, he (‘Umar) ordered that they (Abū Bakr and his two companions) be whipped.¹²⁸

‘Allāmah al-Albānī again copies the above and says:

قلت: وهذا إسناد صحيح على شرط الشيخين.

I say: **This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*** upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.¹²⁹

So, this is the full picture, as gleaned from the reports:

1. Abū Bakrah and some other people filed a criminal complaint of adultery against al-Mughīrah b. Shu’bah with ‘Umar.
2. Al-Mughīrah was a close friend of ‘Umar.
3. ‘Umar summoned the accused – who was his friend – and the Abū Bakrah team to his court for the trial.
4. As Abū Bakrah and two other people testified, ‘Umar – the judge – increasingly blushed. Convicting and sentencing al-Mughīrah was *very* unbearable for him. So, he dismissively denied the reports of Abū Bakrah and his team.
5. It was a case of adultery, and four witnesses were required. Ziyād was the fourth to testify. Like others, he came all the way from

¹²⁸ ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Abī Shaybah Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Bakr b. Abī Shaybah al-Kūfī al-‘Ubsī, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah fī al-Aḥādīth wa al-Athār* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1409 H) [annotator: Prof. Sa‘īd al-Laḥām], vol. 6, P. 560, # 1

¹²⁹ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Irwā al-Ghālil fī Takbrīj Aḥādīth Manār al-Sabīl* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1405 H), vol. 8, p. 29, # 2361

Baṣra (where al-Mughīrah was governor for ‘Umar prior to the trial) to Madīnah to testify *against* al-Mughīrah in a case of adultery. But, before he began his testimony, ‘Umar made some direct moves to entice him and to intimidate him.

6. First, ‘Umar called him “the remover of the punishment”. This was an obvious suggestion to Ziyād that he *must* contradict his colleagues. He simply had no other choice but to remove the sentence of death still hanging over the neck of al-Mughīrah.
7. ‘Umar also described him as the one who would testify with the “truth”. This was another clear signal to him to contradict his colleagues. It showed that the *khalīfah* had blacklisted Ziyād’s colleagues for testifying against al-Mughīrah. If Ziyād wanted to get into the good books of the powerful *khalīfah*, he *must* tell only what ‘Umar would accept as the “truth”.
8. Finally, ‘Umar shouted at him, with such distressing force that it could cause some people to pass out! The intention, obviously, was to unsettle and intimidate him. Going against the *khalīfah* could have highly devastating consequences. The message was unmistakable.
9. So, Ziyād got the signal, and went against his colleagues. He denied having seen a sexual penetration. One wonders why then he had taken all the pain to come to Madīnah from Iraq! Was it not to testify against al-Mughīrah *for adultery*? Something clearly was not right here. Ziyād was altering his testimony in the light of the new circumstances. In any case, he admitted to seeing “a disgusting affair” and “a disgusting scene”, apparently involving al-Mughīrah and the accused woman, which involved “an evil assembly” of both accused persons.
10. ‘Umar – the judge – became joyous, thanking Allāh, and ordered Abū Bakrah and his colleagues to be flogged for allegedly lying against al-Mughīrah!
11. After the lashing, Abū Bakrah stood up, and re-testified to al-Mughīrah’s adultery – despite the clear dangers.
12. ‘Umar intended to re-lash him but ‘Alī, as usual, saved Abū Bakrah with his knowledge.

To ‘Umar, this was fair, impartial hearing!

An interesting side to this discussion is that ‘Umar actually did not ordinarily seem to place much value on the Qur’ānic requirement for four witnesses in the case of adultery. For instance, he convicted a woman simply for having only a six-month pregnancy! He never asked for *any* four witnesses. Rather, he did not even request for *any* testimony from anyone!

However, when his close friend was involved, he became extraordinarily strict with the requirement, and displayed brutal bias in favour of the accused throughout the proceedings.

The testimony of Ziyād itself embarrassingly reveals the direct influence of ‘Umar’s intimidation and enticement over the former. Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī explains the circumstances of al-Mughīrah’s alleged adultery:

وساق قصة المغيرة هذه من طرق كثيرة حصلها أن المغيرة بن شعبة كان أمير البصرة
لعمر فأتته أبو بكر وهو نقيب الثقيفي الصحابي المشهور وكان أبو بكر ونافع بن
الحرث بن كلدة الثقيفي وهو معدود في الصحابة وشبل بكسر المعجمة وسكون
الموحدة ابن معبد بن عتيبة بن الحرث البجلي وهو معدود في الخضرمين وزياذ بن
عبيد الذي كان بعد ذلك يقال له زياد بن أبي سفيان أخوه من أم أمهم سمية مولاة
الحرث بن كلدة فاجتمعوا جميعا فأروا المغيرة متبطن المرأة وكان يقال لها الرقطاء أم
جميل بنت عمرو بن الأرقم الهلالية وزوجها الحجاج بن عتيك بن الحرث بن عوف
الجشمي

The story of al-Mughīrah has been transmitted THROUGH SEVERAL CHAINS. Its summary is that al-Mughīrah b. Shu‘bah was the governor of Baṣra for ‘Umar. Abū Bakrah, whose real name was Naḥf al-Thaqafī, accused him (of adultery). He (Abū Bakrah) is a well-known Ṣaḥābī. There was Abū Bakrah. There was (also) Nāfi’ b. al-Ḥarith b. Kildah al-Thaqafī, who is counted among the Ṣaḥābah. There was Shibl b. Ma‘bad b. ‘Utaybah b. al-Ḥarith al-Bajalī (as well), and he was considered to be among those (Ṣaḥābah) who witnessed both the Jāhiliyyah and the Prophetic era. (Finally), there was Ziyād b. ‘Ubayd – who was later called Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān – (and he was) his (Abū Bakrah’s) brother from their grandmother, Sumayyah freed maid of al-Ḥarith b. Kildah. THEY ALL HAD GATHERED TOGETHER and had seen al-Mughīrah in a secret affair with the woman called al-Riqṭāh Umm Jamīl bint ‘Amr al-Afqam al-Hilāliyyah, and her husband was al-Ḥajjāj b. ‘Utaybah b. al-Ḥarith b. ‘Awf al-Jashmī.¹³⁰

There were four of them together, including Ziyād. They all together saw al-Mughīrah having a secret affair with Umm Jamīl, whose husband was al-Ḥajjāj. The other three witnesses saw al-Mughīrah’s male organ entering

¹³⁰ Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah li al-Ṭabā‘ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 5, p. 187

Umm Jamīl’s female organ, and all of these three were totally trustworthy Ṣaḥābah of the Messenger, by Sunnī standards. How then on earth did Ziyād miss that?! It seems fair to conclude that he was deliberately concealing the most crucial part of his testimony. It was simply impossible for him not to have seen what the others saw, especially as he was not described as suffering from any eye problems. Moreover, what really did Ziyād mean by having seen “a *disgusting* affair” between the couple? Was he not actually implying the adultery of al-Mughīrah and Umm Jamīl? From the look of things, Ziyād saw what the three Ṣaḥābah saw, but decided to be ambiguous and to double-speak after ‘Umar enticed and intimidated him. If the *khalīfah* had not intervened, he most probably would have only corroborated his co-witnesses.

Anyway, there are some damning consequences in this particular case for Sunnī Islām. Abū Bakrah, Shibl and Nāfi’ b. al-Ḥarith were Ṣaḥābah. Abū Bakrah in particular was a prominent Ṣaḥābī, whose *aḥādīth* are documented in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs*, and in all other authoritative Sunnī books, *in abundance*. Of special interest is the fact that Abū Bakrah was the main complainant against al-Mughīrah, and he never repented from it. After being lashed by ‘Umar, he still reiterated his claim that al-Mughīrah was an adulterer. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī copies a further report in this regard:

ثم أخرج من طريق عيينة بن عبد الرحمن عن أبيه عن أبي بكرة ، فذكر قصة المغيرة قال: " فقدما على عمر رضي الله عنه ، فشهد أبو بكر ونافع ، وشبل بن معبد ، فلما دعا زيادا قال: رأيت منكرا ، فكبر عمر رضي الله عنه ودعا بأبي بكرة ، وصاحبيه ، فضربهم ، قال: فقال أبو بكرة يعني بعدما حده: والله إني لصادق ، وهو فعل ما شهد به ، فهم بضربه ، فقال علي: لئن ضربت هذا فارجم هذا "

ولسناده صحيح أيضا. وعيينة بن عبد الرحمن هو ابن جوشن الغطفاني وهو ثقة كأيّيه.

Then he (al-Bayhaqī)¹³¹ recorded through the route of ‘Uyaynah b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman from his father from Abū Bakrah, and he mentioned the story of al-Mughīrah, and (then) said:

¹³¹ See Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Bayhaqī, *Sunan al-Kubrā* (Makkah: Maktabah Dār al-Bāz; 1414 H) [annotator: Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 8, p. 235, # 16821

We got to ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, and Abū Bakrah testified, as well as Nāfi’ and Shibl b. Ma’bad. When Ziyād was called, he said, “**I saw a disgusting act.**” Therefore, ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said *Allāh Akbar*, and thereby summoned Abū Bakrah and his two companions and beat them. So, Abū Bakrah said, that is, after he had been punished, “**I SWEAR BY ALLĀH, I am saying the truth. He (al-Mughīrah) did what we have testified against him about.**” Therefore, he (‘Umar) intended to beat him (again). But, ‘Alī said, “If you beat this one, then you must stone that one.”

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* too. ‘Uyaynah b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman is Ibn Jawshan al-Ghaṭfānī and he is *thiqah* (trustworthy), like his father.¹³²

By all accounts therefore, all *aḥādīth* by Abū Bakrah must be thrown away by the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah as fairytales of a “liar”. It is the Order of Allāh, *as long as* he is believed to have failed to prove his charge against al-Mughīrah. This is where the great dilemma hides for our Sunnī brothers. Allāh has stated:

والذين يرمون المحصنات ثم لم يأتوا بأربعة شهداء فاجلدوهم ثمانين جلدة ولا تقبلوا لهم شهادة أبدا وأولئك هم الفاسقون إلا الذين تابوا من بعد ذلك وأصلحوا فإن الله غفور رحيم

Those who accuse chaste women, **and do not produce four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony FOREVER. THEY INDEED ARE THE LIARS, EXCEPT THOSE WHO REPENT thereafter and make corrections.** Verily, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.¹³³

He also proclaims:

لولا جاءوا عليه بأربعة شهداء فإذ لم يأتوا بالشهداء فأولئك عند الله هم الكاذبون

Why did they not produce four witnesses? Since they have not produced the witnesses, **THEN IN THE SIGHT OF ALLĀH, THEY ARE THE LIARS.**¹³⁴

¹³² Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Irwā al-Ghalīl fī Takbrīj Aḥādīth Manār al-Sabīl* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1405 H), vol. 8, p. 29, # 2361

¹³³ Qur’ān 24:4

¹³⁴ Qur’ān 24:13

Imām ‘Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211 H) reiterates the fact which connects Abū Bakrah to the above verses:

عبد الرزاق عن معمر عن الزهري عن ابن المسيب قال: شهد على المغيرة بن شعبة
ثلاثا بالزنا، ونكل زياد، فخذ عمر الثلاثة، وقال لهم: توبوا تقبل شهادتكم، فتاب
رجلان ولم يتب أبو بكر، فكان لا يقبل شهادته، وأبو بكر أخو زياد لأمه، فلما كان
من أمر زياد ما كان، حلف أبو بكر أن لا يكلم زيادا أبدا، فلم يكلمه حتى مات

‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – al-Zuhrī – Ibn al-Musayyab:

Three people testified against al-Mughīrah b. Shu’bah for adultery. **But Ziyād recoiled.** So, ‘Umar punished the three (with lashing), and said to them, “Repent, and your (future) testimonies will be accepted.” So, two of the men repented **but Abū Bakrah did not repent. Therefore, his testimonies were no longer accepted.** Abū Bakrah was a maternal brother of Ziyād. When what happened in the case of Ziyād occurred, Abū Bakrah swore that he would never again speak to Ziyād. As such, he never again spoke to him till his death.¹³⁵

The chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*, and has been so declared by the top *muhādithūn* of the Ahl al-Sunnah. Imām Muslim (d. 261 H), for instance, has relied upon this chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

حدثنا عبد بن حميد أخبرنا عبد الرزاق أخبرنا معمر عن الزهري عن ابن المسيب
عن أبي هريرة

‘Abd b. Hamīd – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – al-Zuhrī – Ibn al-Musayyab – Abū Hurayrah¹³⁶

Imām al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 H) also records:

حدثنا محمود بن غيلان حدثنا عبد الرزاق أخبرنا معمر عن الزهري عن ابن المسيب
عن أبي هريرة

¹³⁵ Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hamām al-Ṣa’nānī, *al-Muṣannaf* [annotator: Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-A’zamī], vol. 7, p. 384, # 13564

¹³⁶ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 1774, # 2263 (8)

Maḥmūd b. Ghīlān – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – al-Zuhri – Ibn al-Musayyab – Abū Hurayrah¹³⁷

Al-Tirmidhī comments:

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*¹³⁸

‘Allāmah al-Albānī also says:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*¹³⁹

Imām Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 H) has included the chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* as well:

ثنا أحمد بن منصور الرمادي ثنا عبد الرزاق أخبرني معمر عن الزهري عن ابن المسيب عن أبي هريرة

Aḥmad b. Maṣṣūr al-Ramādī – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – al-Zuhri – Ibn al-Musayyab – Abū Hurayrah¹⁴⁰

Dr. Al-A’ẓamī has this simple verdict:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 4, p. 95, # 1512

¹³⁸ *Ibid*

¹³⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁰ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A’ẓamī], vol. 4, p. 362, # 3078

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*

Everything therefore boils down to this insoluble Sunnī maze:

1. Anyone who accuses another of adultery *must* present four witnesses.
2. If he is unable to do so, then he must be whipped by the authorities.
3. He must be asked to repent. If he does, his future testimonies are accepted.
4. If he refuses to repent, then he becomes a liar in the Sight of Allāh, and his testimonies *must* be rejected till the Hour.
5. Abū Bakrah accused al-Mughīrah, ‘Umar’s close friend and governor over Baṣra, of adultery, and presented four eye-witnesses (including himself).
6. All four witnesses came all the way from Iraq to modern-day Saudi Arabia to testify against al-Mughīrah *in a case of adultery*.
7. However, ‘Umar enticed and intimidated the fourth of them, just as he was about to give his testimony. He (the fourth witness) thereby “recoiled” and made ambiguous, ambivalent statements instead.
8. So, the case against al-Mughīrah failed due to the fourth witness’s action.
9. Abū Bakrah and the other two witnesses therefore were whipped by ‘Umar. They were thereafter asked by him to repent *so that their future testimonies became acceptable*. The other two repented (most probably from pressure), while Abū Bakrah *swore by Allāh* that he was truthful in his testimony against al-Mughīrah. He preferred to be branded “a liar” by the state, and that his future testimonies be rejected, rather than to falsify what he knew to be the truth.
10. Abū Bakrah also believed that Ziyād (his maternal brother), who “recoiled”, had wronged him terribly. So, he stopped speaking to Ziyād from that moment till his death!
11. Whoever believes that Abū Bakrah was wrong in his testimony *must* also accept that he was “a liar” in the Sight of Allāh, *due to his refusal to repent*. The Qur’ān is very explicit in this regard, and gives no exception. As a result, such a person must reject all of Abū Bakrah’s *aḥādīth*.
12. However, the Ahl al-Sunnah consider Abū Bakrah to be perfectly trustworthy in everything he said, before and after the incident! Yet, they maintain that ‘Umar was correct to have whipped him!
13. But, it was either ‘Umar treated Abū Bakrah unjustly, or Abū Bakrah was truly a liar in the Sight of Allāh. There is no third option to it.

Our Sunnī brothers want to eat their cake and still have it. However, they

can only do one of both. Their position on Abū Bakrah is a strategic do-or-die affair, which they can never let go. This, in reality, merely deepens their dilemma. If they accepted that Abū Bakrah, a prominent Ṣaḥābī, was a liar in the Sight of Allāh, then they would have opened a door that could only lead to the complete collapse of their entire religion in no time! Yet, their pro-Abū Bakrah stance only fuels the theory that al-Mughīrah was truly guilty of adultery, but that ‘Umar deliberately manipulated the judicial system to shield his dear friend from justice. Moreover, in the course of doing that, the *ḵhalīfah* inflicted immense injustice upon Abū Bakrah for telling the truth.

10 ḤADĪTH AL-QAḌĀ

AN AGE OF JUNGLE JUSTICE VII

No one ever knew that looking handsome could become a criminal offence until the rule of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. The grand Sunnī *mufṣṣir*, Imām al-Alūsī (d. 1270 H), proclaims:

صح أن عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله تعالى عنه غرب نصر بن حجاج إلى البصرة بسبب
أنه لجماله افتتن بعض النساء به

It is **authentically transmitted** that ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allāh the Most High pleased be pleased him, banished Naṣr b. Ḥajjāj to Baṣra because - due to his good looks, some women were obsessed with him.¹⁴²

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) also submits:

وقد أخرج بن سعد والخرائطي بسند صحيح عن عبد الله بن بريدة قال بينما عمر بن
الخطاب يعس ذات ليلة في خلافته فإذا امرأة تقول هل من سبيل إلى خمر فأشربها
أو من سبيل إلى نصر بن حجاج فلما أصبح سأل عنه فأرسل إليه فإذا هو من أحسن
الناس شعرا وأصحبهم وجهها فأمره عمر أن يطم شعره ففعل فخرجت جبهته فازداد
حسنا فأمره أن يعتم فازداد حسنا فقال عمر لا والذي نفسي بيده لا تجامعني ببلد

¹⁴² Abū al-Faḍl Maḥmūd al-Alūsī, *Riḥ al-Ma’ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm wa Sab’ al-Mathānī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī), vol. 18, p. 81

فأمر له بما يصلحه وصيره إلى البصرة

Ibn Sa'd and al-Kharāfi have recorded **with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain** from 'Abd Allāh b. Buraydah who narrated:

While 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was on patrol one night during his *ḵhalāḵah*, there was a woman (he overheard) saying, "Is there a way to get to alcohol to drink, or a way to get to Naṣr b. Ḥajjāj?" In the morning, he ('Umar) asked about him (Naṣr), and summoned him. **He was one of the most beautiful of mankind in terms of the hair, and one of their most good-looking.** So, he ('Umar) ordered him to collect his hair. He did so, and his forehead appeared. As a result, he became even more handsome. He ('Umar) ordered him (again) to wear a turban. But, his beauty increased (nonetheless). So, 'Umar said, **"No! I swear by the One in Whose Hand my life is, you cannot stay WITH ME in the same town"**. Therefore, he ordered what befitted him and relocated to Baṣra.¹⁴³

Naṣr b. al-Ḥajjāj, one of the Ṣaḥābah, committed no other "crime" than that he looked *very* handsome. For that, he was summarily tried and penalized, forcibly "relocated" to Baṣra. 'Umar was the first human being to do this throughout history. However, in April 2013, the Saudi authorities followed his precedent in a very famous, severely embarrassing case¹⁴⁴ that caused widespread worldwide mockery of Islām over the internet. Three Emirati men were deported by Riyadh to the United Arab Emirates literally for being "too handsome"!

'Umar's reason for banishing Naṣr seems even weirder than the "punishment" itself. If we assumed that the *ḵhalāḵah* expelled him because "women were obsessed with him", were there no women in Baṣra? Apparently, no matter the claims, the true motive behind 'Umar's action had nothing to do with women. In fact, the *ḵhalāḵah* himself outlined his justification in very clear words: he could not tolerate living in the same city with Naṣr. So if 'Umar had later moved to Baṣra he would still have re-banished Naṣr to another faraway town. From all indications, it seems that

¹⁴³ Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyiz al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1415 H) [annotators: Shaykh 'Ādil Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Mawjūd and Shaykh 'Alī Muḥammad Ma'ūḍ], vol. 4, pp. 382-383, # 8862

¹⁴⁴ Rob Williams, "Omar Borkan Al Gala: Is this one of the three men who are 'too sexy' for Saudi Arabia", *The Independent*, Friday 26 April 2013 [http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/omar-borkan-al-gala-is-this-one-of-the-three-men-who-are-too-sexy-for-saudi-arabia-8590104.html]

the *khalīfah* was only very bitter about the latter’s good looks.

In any case, it is pretty obvious that ‘Umar would never have tolerated the presence of Prophet Yūsuf, *‘alaihi al-salām*, in Madīnah had the latter lived during the former’s rule. These are Allāh’s Words concerning His prophet:

وقال نسوة في المدينة امرأت العزيز تراود فتاها عن نفسه قد شغفها حبا إنا لنراها في ضلال مبين فلما سمعت بمكرهن أرسلت إليهن وأعتدت لهن متكأ وآتت كل واحدة منهن سكيناً وقالت أخرج عليهن فلما رأينه أكبرنه وقطعن أيديهن وقلن حاش لله ما هذا بشراً إنا هذا إلا ملك كريم

And the women in the city said, “The Queen is seeking to seduce her young man (i.e. Yūsuf, her slave then). Indeed, she loves him violently. Verily, we see her in plain error.” So when she (the queen) heard of their (the women’s) accusation, she sent for them and prepared a banquet for them; she gave each one of them a knife (to cut the foodstuff with), and she said (to Yūsuf), “Come out before them.” **Then, when they saw him, they exalted him AND CUT THEIR HANDS. They said, “Allāh forbid! THIS IS NOT A MAN! This is none other than a noble angel!”**¹⁴⁵

These were the women of ancient Egypt. Prophet Yūsuf was so handsome that they could not believe that he was even a man! So, one can safely conclude that the noble prophet had superhuman beauty. What strengthens this submission is that these women, in their trance over the sight of him, were absentmindedly cutting their hands with knives, without flinching! With these facts, Naṣr b. al-Ḥajjāj was apparently a *very* ugly duckling compared to Yūsuf b. Ya’qūb, the prophet of Allāh. Interestingly, the pagan king of Egypt tolerated and honoured Prophet Yūsuf in his city, even in his palace! By contrast, if it had been during ‘Umar’s *khalīfah*, he would have banished the prophet to a very distant land! The *khalīfah* simply could not accommodate in his city any man like Naṣr or Yūsuf.

¹⁴⁵ Qur’ān 12:30-31

11 ḤADĪTH AL-QADĀ

‘ALĪ VERSUS ‘UMAR

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) launches a spirited campaign to bring down ‘Alī’s status as the best judge in the *Ummah* in order to place ‘Umar above him. He simply cannot stomach the possibility of Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, surpassing the second Sunnī *ḵbalīfah* in anything, especially in such highly sensitive, knowledge-based areas as justice dispensation. The reason for these panicky moves can be discerned from these words of our dear Shaykh:

و في الترمذي و غيره عنه عليه الصلاة و السلام انه قال لو لم ابعث فيكم لبعث فيكم
عمر و لفظ الترمذي لو كان بعدي نبي لكان عمر قال الترمذي حديث حسن

In (*Sunan*) al-Tirmidhī and others, it is narrated from him, peace and blessings be upon him, that he said, “**If I had not been sent as a messenger among you, ‘Umar would have been sent as a messenger among you instead.**” The text of al-Tirmidhī reads, “**If there were to be a prophet after me, it would have been ‘Umar.**”

Al-Tirmidhī says: *A ḥasan ḥadīth*.¹⁴⁶

Elsewhere, he reiterates this:

¹⁴⁶ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 508

وفي الترمذي لو لم أبعث فيكم لبعث فيكم عمر ولو كان بعدي نبي لكان عمر

It is recorded in (*Sunan*) al-Tirmidhī: “If I had not been sent as a messenger among you, ‘Umar would have been sent as a messenger instead and if there were to be a prophet after me, it would have been ‘Umar”.¹⁴⁷

Those two one-sided, sectarian reports establish two realities:

1. ‘Umar and the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alīhi*, had *equal* credentials and abilities to be the master of the prophets, sent to the entirety of mankind till the Hour. Therefore, ‘Umar was a perfect replacement for the Prophet.
2. Due to ‘Umar’s status as the sole match – in qualification – to the Messenger, he was the only one qualified to be the first prophet after Muḥammad, had prophethood not ceased.

The bottom-line is that ‘Umar was far better than Abū Bakr in all ways and in all things! So, if ‘Alī were superior to ‘Umar, then he was the master of both the first and the second *khalfahs*. In any case, those two *ḥadīths* are one-sided (and therefore of no probative value in our research), and contradict the Verse of *Iṣṭafā*, the Verse of *Taḥbīr* and several *ṣaḥīḥ* and *mutawātir aḥādīth* (such as *Ḥadīth al-Ghadr*, *Ḥadīth al-Manṣūlah*, *Ḥadīth al-Ṭayr*, *Ḥadīth al-Thaqalayn*, etc). The most important part is that both reports about ‘Umar go against well-established historical facts about him, his knowledge and his abilities. From all angles, both *ḥadīths* were motivated by polemical motives, and manufactured to “raise the stakes” for the second *khalfah*.

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah makes an interesting strike:

و قد وجد لعمر و علي و غيرها فتاوى كثيرة تخالف النصوص حتى جمع الشافعي مجلدا في خلاف علي و ابن مسعود و جمع محمد بن نصر المروزي كتابا كبيرا في ذلك

There were LOTS of *fatwas* from ‘Umar, ‘Alī and others that contradicted the revealed texts (i.e the Qur’ān and Sunnah), such that **al-Shāfi’ī compiled a whole volume on the contradictions of ‘Alī and Ibn Mas’ūd (to the Qur’ān and Sunnah), and Muḥammad b. Naṣr**

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 303

al-Marūzī compiled a huge book on that.¹⁴⁸

He concedes that both ‘Umar and Ibn Mas’ūd contradicted the Qur’ān and Sunnah *massively* in their verdicts. We agree with him, as there exists solid evidence from both Sunnī and Shī’ī sources confirming that. It is a wonder then how our dear Shaykh manages to believe that ‘Umar was perfectly fit for prophethood despite this embarrassing fact! What else would he have been other than a prophet who would have opposed the Qur’ān and the Sunnah on “lots” of occasions?! This reality reveals that the purely one-sided, sectarian *ḥadīths* could not have genuinely originated from the Messenger of Allāh. He *never* uttered anything that falls out of line with simple logic.

But then, did Imām al-Shāfi’ī and al-Marūzī really compiled books detailing Amīr al-Mūminīn Alī’s “contradictions” to the Qur’ān and Sunnah? Well, there is no evidence of *any* such books in our times! Besides, our dear Shaykh seems confused on the exact authorship of those “books”. First, he claims that both al-Shāfi’ī and al-Marūzī wrote *separate* books. However, this is a contrary submission he also makes:

وقد جمع الشافعي ومحمد بن نصر المروزي كتابا كبيرا فيما لم يأخذ به المسلمون من قول علي لكون قول غيره من الصحابة أتبع للكتاب والسنة

Al-Shāfi’ī AND Muḥammad b. Naṣr al-Marūzī compiled a huge book about what the Muslims rejected from the statement of ‘Alī, because the statement of others from the Ṣaḥābah were more in compliance with the Qur’ān and Sunnah.¹⁴⁹

So, it was after all a *joint* authorship! What exactly do we believe now? Moreover, where exactly *is* this book? Has anyone in history *ever* quoted it? Has anyone in history *ever* referenced it? The reality is that no such book *ever* existed! Imām al-Subkī (d. 773 H) reveals the truth about the book of al-Marūzī:

وقال أبو ذر محمد بن محمد بن يوسف القاضي كان الصدر الأول من مشايخنا يقولون رجال خراسان أربعة ابن المبارك ويحيى بن يحيى وإسحاق بن راهويه ومحمد بن نصر المروزي وقال أبو بكر الصيرفي لو لم يصنف المروزي إلا كتاب القسامة لكان من

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 7, p. 502

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 281

أفقه الناس فكيف وقد صنف كتباً سواها وقال الشيخ أبو إسحاق الشيرازي صنف محمد هذا كتباً ضمنها الآثار والفقه وكان من أعلم الناس باختلاف الصحابة ومن بعدهم في الأحكام وصنف كتاباً فيها خالف فيه أبو حنيفة علياً وعبد الله رضى الله عنها

Abū Dharr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Qāḍī said, “The pioneers among our Shaykhs used to say that the scholars of Khurāsān (in Iran) were four: Ibn al-Mubārak, Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā, Ishāq b. Rāhwayh and Muḥammad b. Naṣr al-Marūzī.” Abū Bakr al-Ṣayarfī said, “If al-Marūzī had never authored any book except *Kitāb al-Qasamah* alone, he would nonetheless have been among the most knowledgeable of mankind. Meanwhile, he wrote many books other than it.” Shaykh Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī said, “Muḥammad (b. Naṣr al-Marūzī) wrote books which contained reports and Islāmic jurisprudence, and was one of the most knowledgeable of mankind concerning the differences of the Ṣaḥābah and those after them on *al-aḥkām* (jurisprudence). **He wrote a book concerning the contradictions of Abū Ḥanīfah to ‘Alī and ‘Abd Allāh (b. Mas’ūd),** may Allāh be pleased with them both.¹⁵⁰

So, the book – in reality - was only about Abū Ḥanīfah’s contradictions to ‘Alī and Ibn Mas’ūd! We leave the judgment to the esteemed reader.

There are authentic Sunnī reports which further expose the fallacy of the allegations of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah against Amīr al-Mūminīn. For instance, Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي حدثني يحيى عن الأعمش عن عمرو بن مرة عن أبي البختري عن علي رضي الله عنه قال: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى اليمن وأنا حديث السن قال قلت تبعثني إلى قوم يكون بينهم أحداث ولا علم لي بالقضاء قال ان الله سيهدي لسانك ويثبت قلبك قال فما شككت في قضاء بين اثنين بعد

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yaḥyā – al-A’mash – ‘Amr b. Marrah – Abū al-Bakhtarī – ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him:

I was sent by the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, to Yemen,

¹⁵⁰ Tāj al-Dīn b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Kāfir al-Subkī, *Tabaqāt al-Shāfi’iyyah al-Kubrā* (Hajr li al-Taba’āt wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 2nd edition, 1413 H) [annotators: Dr. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī and Dr. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥalwī], vol. 2, p. 247

and I was young of age. I said, “You are sending me to a people among whom exist disputes, and I have no knowledge in justice dispensation.” He replied, **“Verily, Allāh will guide your tongue and make your heart firm.” I never have doubt while dispensing justice between any two people ever after.**¹⁵¹

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ says:

صحيح رجاله ثقات رجال الشيخين

Ṣaḥīḥ, its narrators are trustworthy, narrators of the two Shaykhs¹⁵²

Imām al-Hākim (d. 403 H) also records:

حدثني علي بن حمشاد ثنا العباس بن الفضل الأسفاطي ثنا أحمد بن يونس ثنا أبو بكر بن عياش عن الأعمش عن عمرو بن مرة عن أبي البختري قال علي رضي الله عنه: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى اليمن قال: فقلت: يا رسول الله إني رجل شاب وأنه يرد علي من القضاء ما لا علم لي به قال: فوضع يده على صدري وقال اللهم ثبت لسانه واهد قلبه فما شككت في القضاء أو في قضاء بعد

‘Alī b. Ḥamshād – al-‘Abbās b. al-Faḍl al-Asfāṭī – Aḥmad b. Yūnus – Abū Bakr b. ‘Ayyāsh – al-A’mash – ‘Amr b. Marrah – Abū al-Bakhtarī – ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him:

The Messenger of Allāh, may Allāh be pleased with him, sent me to Yemen. So, I said, “O Messenger of Allāh, I am a young man, and disputes will be brought to me for judgment, of which I have no knowledge.” Therefore, he placed his hand on my chest, and said, **“O Allāh, make firm his tongue and guide his heart.” I never have doubt while dispensing justice ever after.**¹⁵³

Al-Hākim comments:

¹⁵¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 1, p. 83, # 636

¹⁵² *Ibid*

¹⁵³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Hākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 145, # 4658

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs¹⁵⁴

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) agrees:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim¹⁵⁵

Imām Abū Dāwud (d. 275 H) documents a *mutāba’ah* for the report of Abū al-Bakhtarī:

حدثنا عمرو بن عون قال أخبرنا شريك عن سمالك عن حنش عن علي عليه السلام قال: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى اليمن قاضيا فقلت يا رسول الله ترسلني وأنا حديث السن ولا علم لي بالقضاء ؟ فقال " إن الله سيهدي قلبك ويثبت لسانك فإذا جلس بين يديك الخصمان فلا تقضين حتى تسمع من الآخر كما سمعت من الأول فإنه أحرى أن يتبين لك القضاء " قال فما زلت قاضيا أو ما شككت في قضاء بعد.

‘Amr b. ‘Awn – Sharīk – Simāk – Ḥanash – ‘Alī, peace be upon him (*‘alaihi salām*):

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, sent me to Yemen *as a judge*. So, I said, “O Messenger of Allāh, you are sending me while I am young of age and have no knowledge of justice dispensation.” Therefore, he said, “**Verily, Allāh will guide your heart and will make firm your tongue.** Whenever two disputants sit in front of you, do not give judgment until you have heard both parties. This will make clear to you the (correct) judgment.” **I never cease to be a judge, or never have doubt while dispensing justice, ever since.**¹⁵⁶

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) says:

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁶ Abū Dāwud Sulaymān b. al-Ash’ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwud* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 3, p. 327, # 3584

حسن

*Hasan*¹⁵⁷

Imām Aḥmad also records this *shāhid*:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن آدم ثنا إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن حارثة بن مضرب عن علي رضي الله عنه قال: بعثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى اليمن فقلت إنك تبعثني إلى قوم وهم أسن مني لأقضي بينهم فقال اذهب فإن الله سيهدي قلبك ويثبت لسانك

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yaḥyā b. Ādam – Isrā’īl – Abū Ishāq – Ḥārithah b. Muḍrab – ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, sent me to Yemen. So, I said, “You are sending me to a people who are older than me that I should judge between them.” He replied, “**Go, for Allāh will guide your heart and make firm your tongue.**”¹⁵⁸

Shaykh al-Arnā’ūt states:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*¹⁵⁹

Whenever Amīr al-Mūminīn set out to judge on any matter, Allāh would always guide both his heart and his tongue, and would also make them firm. This removes the possibility of error or misguidance in whatsoever judgments he ever gave:

ومن يهد الله فما له من مضل

And whomsoever Allāh guides, **for him there can be NO**

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūt], vol. 1, p. 156, # 1341

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*

misleader.¹⁶⁰

With this in mind, it is apparent that whosoever attributes errors to the judgments and verdicts of ‘Alī is actually attributing them to Allāh as well! So, we ask Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah and his followers: was it Allāh Who was “guiding” his heart and his tongue to those “contradictions” to the Qur’ān and Sunnah? We seek His refuge from such blasphemy. No truth – whether in narrations or mere submissions – can be in *anything* that denigrates the Almighty Lord.

¹⁶⁰ Qur’ān 39:37

12 ḤADĪTH AL-TAFDĪL

INVESTIGATING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

لا نسلم أن علياً أفضل أهل زمانه بل خير هذه الأمة بعد نبيها أبو بكر ثم عمر كما
ثبت ذلك عن علي وغيره

We do not agree that ‘Alī was the overall best of his time. Rather, the best of this Ummah after its Prophet are Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, as is authentically narrated from ‘Alī and others.¹⁶¹

It is true that our Sunnī brothers consider Abū Bakr to be the best of our Ummah, followed only by ‘Umar. However, during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ālihi*, it was a different story entirely. There is irrefutable evidence in the Sunnī books establishing that the Ṣaḥābah used to consider Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, to be their best during the lifetime of the Messenger. Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) presents one of such proofs:

حدثنا عبد الله قال حدثني أبي قتنا محمد بن جعفر نا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن
عبد الرحمن بن يزيد عن علقمة عن عبد الله قال : كنا نتحدث ان أفضل أهل

¹⁶¹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 6, p. 475

المدينة علي بن أبي طالب

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Muḥammad b. Ja’far – Shu’bah – Abū Ishāq – ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd – ‘Alqamah – ‘Abd Allāh (b. Mas’ūd):

“We used to say that **the overall best** of the people of Madīnah was ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.”¹⁶²

“We” (in the *ḥadīth*)¹⁶³ apparently refers to the Ṣaḥābah generally, and more specifically to the most senior of them living in Madīnah. Ibn Mas’ūd was obviously making a reference to a past which was then different from the present. This was why he said “we USED TO”. In other words, at that point in time when he was making his statement, things had become different. People were now giving ‘Alī’s place to another person. Ibn Mas’ūd was, no doubt, speaking about the time of the Prophet. All the most senior Ṣaḥābah and their neighbours were living in Madīnah with the Messenger of Allāh. The phrase “people of Madīnah” originally referred to them (excluding only the Prophet, of course).¹⁶⁴ These, needless to say, included Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān.

So, is the above report authentic? Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) says about the first narrator:

عبد الله بن أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل الشيباني أبو عبد الرحمن ولد الإمام ثقة

‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥman: son of the Imām, *thiqah* (trustworthy).¹⁶⁵

What about his father? Al-Ḥāfiẓ answers:

¹⁶² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Faḍāil al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1403 H) [annotator: Dr. Waṣīyullah Muḥammad ‘Abbās], vol. 2, p. 604, # 1033

¹⁶³ We are calling it a *ḥadīth*, rather than an *athar*, because it lays down a consensus of the Ṣaḥābah, which they had during the lifetime of the Prophet of Allāh. It is our firm belief that they could not have formed such a consensus except on the basis of what they had learnt from the Messenger.

¹⁶⁴ See Qur’ān 9:101 and 9:120

¹⁶⁵ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Taḥdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 477, # 3216

أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل بن هلال بن أسد الشيباني المروزي نزيل بغداد أبو عبد الله
أحد الأئمة ثقة حافظ فقيه حجة

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal b. Hilāl b. Asad al-Shaybānī al-Marūzī,
a Baghdād resident, Abū ‘Abd Allāh: One of the Imāms, **thiqah**
(trustworthy), *ḥāfiẓ*, jurist, *hujjah* (an authority).¹⁶⁶

Al-Ḥāfiẓ also has these comments about the third narrator:

محمد بن جعفر الهذلي البصري المعروف بغندر ثقة صحيح الكتاب إلا أن فيه غفلة

Muḥammad b. Ja’far al-Hazalī al-Baṣrī, better known as Ghandar:
Thiqah (trustworthy), *ṣaḥiḥ al-kitāb* (i.e. *aḥādīth* from his books are
ṣaḥiḥ) except that there was some negligence in him.¹⁶⁷

Whatever negligence he had does not affect his *aḥādīth* from Shu’bah at all.
He used to accurately record the latter’s reports. So, he narrated them from
his books with perfect precision. Al-Ḥāfiẓ provides further information in
this respect:

وقال ابن مهدي كنا نستفيد من كتب غندر في شعبة وكان وكيع يسميه الصحيح
الكتاب. وقال أبو حاتم عن محمد بن ابان البلخي قال ابن مهدي غندر أثبت في شعبة
مني وقال ابن المبارك إذا اختلف الناس في حديث شعبة فكتاب غندر حكم بينهم
وقال ابن أبي حاتم سألت أبي عن غندر فقال كان صدوقا وكان مؤدبا وفي حديث
شعبة ثقة

Ibn Mahdī said: “We used to benefit from the books of Ghandar on
Shu’bah. Wakī’ named him *ṣaḥiḥ al-kitāb*.” Abū Ḥātim narrated from
Muḥammad b. Abān al-Balakhī that Ibn Mahdī said: “Ghandar is more
accurate than me as far as Shu’bah is concerned.” Ibn al-Mubārak said,
“**When the people disagree about the *ḥadīth* of Shu’bah, the book
of Ghandar used to judge between them.**” Ibn Abī Ḥātim said: “I
asked my father about Ghandar and he replied, ‘He was *ṣadīq* (very
truthful), and was a teacher and in the *ḥadīth* of Shu’bah, he is **thiqah**

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 44, # 96

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 63, # 5805

(trustworthy).”¹⁶⁸

The fourth narrator, Shu’bah, is a pillar of Sunnī *aḥādīth*. Al-Ḥāfiẓ gives the catch-phrases about him:

شعبة بن الحجاج بن الورد العتكي مولاهم أبو بسطام الواسطي ثم البصري ثقة حافظ
متقن كان الثوري يقول هو أمير المؤمنين في الحديث

Shu’bah b. al-Ḥajjāj b. al-Ward al-‘Atkī, their freed slave, Abū Bustām al-Wāsiṭī, al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**, *ḥāfiẓ*, **extremely precise**. Al-Thawrī used to say: “He was the *amīr al-mūminīn* (the supreme leader) in *al-Ḥadīth*.”¹⁶⁹

Abū Ishāq al-Sabrī is the fifth narrator, and al-Ḥāfiẓ has this to say about him:

عمرو بن عبد الله بن عبيد أبو إسحاق السبيعي بفتح المهملة وكسر الموحدة ثقة
مكثر عابد من الثالثة اختلط بأخرة

‘Amr b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Ubayd Abū Ishāq al-Sabrī: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**; narrated a lot (of *aḥādīth*), a great worshipper (of Allāh), from the third (*ṭabaqat*). He became confused (in his narrations) during the end part of his lifetime.¹⁷⁰

Of course, Shu’bah heard from him before the memory loss. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) explains:

وتابعهم سفيان الثوري وشعبة عن أبي إسحاق، ولكنهما لم يذكرنا النزول،
وروايتهما أصح، لأنهما سمعا منه قبل الاختلاط

Sufyān al-Thawrī and Shu’bah also narrated from Abū Ishāq, although both did not mention the Descent. The reports of both of them (from Abū Ishāq) are more authentic, **because they both heard from him**

¹⁶⁸ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taḍhib al-Taḍhib* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 9, p. 85, # 129

¹⁶⁹ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Taḍhib* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 418, # 2798

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 739, # 5081

BEFORE he became confused.¹⁷¹

Another relevant point is that Abū Ishāq is a *mudallis* and has, on the surface, narrated the report of Ibn Mas'ūd above is an 'an-'an form from 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yazīd. However, the *tadlis* does NOT, in reality, affect the 'an-'an reports of Abū Ishāq – among others - as long as it is Shu'bah narrating from him. Allāmah al-Albānī states further:

قال الترمذي: " حديث حسن صحيح، رواه الثوري وشعبة عن أبي إسحاق ."

قلت: وهو كما قال، وهما قد رويا عنه قبل اختلاطه، وشعبة لا يروي عنه إلا ما صرح فيه بالتحديث كما هو مذكور في ترجمته، فبرايته عنه أمانة شبيهة بتدليس.

Al-Tirmidhī said: "A *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*, al-Thawrī and Shu'bah narrated it from ('an) Abū Ishāq."

I say: It is (truly *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*) as he (al-Tirmidhī) has stated, and both of them (i.e. al-Thawrī and Shu'bah) narrated from him (i.e. Abū Ishāq) before his confusion. **As for Shu'bah, he never narrated anything from him (i.e. Abū Ishāq) except what he (Abū Ishāq) explicitly stated to have directly heard from the person he is narrating from (i.e. *taḥdīth*),** as stated in his *tarjamah* (biography). **Due to his (Shu'bah's) narration from him (i.e. Abū Ishāq), the problem of his *tadlis* is removed.**¹⁷²

In a clearer word, whenever Shu'bah narrates from Abū Ishāq (as in this case of Ibn Mas'ūd's *ḥadīth*), all the problems associated with the latter's reports are removed. The former narrated from him before his confusion in his *aḥādīth*, and never transmitted any *tadlis*-infested reports from him. So, whenever Shu'bah narrates an 'an-'an report from Abū Ishāq, there actually is *taḥdīth* by the latter from his Shaykh. The 'an-'an form is only Shu'bah's convenience style. No wonder, Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) includes this *sanad* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

¹⁷¹ Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Abi Dawūd* (Kuwait: Muasassat al-Gharās li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 1st edition, 1423 H), vol. 7, p. 410, # 2387

¹⁷² Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqḥihāh wa Fawā'idihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma'ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 5, p. 481, # 2366

حدثنا سليمان بن حرب حدثنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد

Sulaymān b. Ḥarb – **Shu’bah** – **Abū Ishāq** – ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd.¹⁷³

This is an ‘*an*’-‘*an*’ report by Abū Ishāq from ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd (the same Shaykh as in the *athar* of Ibn Mas’ūd). Nevertheless, Imām al-Bukhārī considers the chain to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.

Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal has also documented a similar ‘*an*’-‘*an*’ chain:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي قال حدثنا يزيد قال أنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن أبي
ميسرة

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yazīd – **Shu’bah** – **Abū Ishāq** – Abū Maysarah.¹⁷⁴

Al-Arnāūṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.¹⁷⁵

‘Allāmah al-Albānī too authenticates yet another ‘*an*’-‘*an*’ chain of Abū Ishāq:

إسناده: حدثنا حفص بن عمر: ثنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن الأسود عن عبد الله.

قلت: وهذا إسناده صحيح على شرط البخاري

Its chain: Ḥafṣ b. ‘Umar – **Shu’bah** – **Abū Ishāq** – al-Aswad – ‘Abd Allāh.

¹⁷³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J‘ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 3, p. 1373, # 3551

¹⁷⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 6, p. 182, # 25532

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*

I say: **This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*** upon the standard of al-Bukhārī.¹⁷⁶

Imām Abū Ya'lā (d. 307 H) also documents an '*an-an*' chain by Abū Ishāq, from 'Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd, like al-Bukhārī:

حدثنا إسحاق حدثنا عبد الصمد حدثنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الرحمن بن
يزيد عن الأسود

Ishāq – 'Abd al-ṣamad – **Shu'bah** – **Abū Ishāq** – '**Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd** – al-Aswad¹⁷⁷

Shaykh Dr. Asad gives this verdict:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*¹⁷⁸

Let us now move to the sixth narrator in the *sanad* of Ibn Mas'ūd's *athbar*: 'Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd. The status of 'Abd al-Raḥman as a *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrator of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is already well-known. Nonetheless, we are pleased to present this further confirmation by al-Ḥāfiẓ:

عبد الرحمن بن يزيد بن قيس النخعي أبو بكر الكوفي ثقة

'Abd al-Raḥman b. Yazīd b. Qays al-Nakha'ī, Abū Bakr al-Kūfī: ***Thiqah*** (trustworthy).¹⁷⁹

Finally, concerning the seventh and last narrator ('Alqamah), al-Ḥāfiẓ al-'Asqalānī proclaims with full strength:

¹⁷⁶ Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Abi Dawūd* (Kuwait: Muasassat al-Gharās li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 1st edition, 1423 H), vol. 5, p. 150, # 1267

¹⁷⁷ Abū Ya'lā Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 8, p. 35, # 4541

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁷⁹ Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabḍīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 596, # 4057

علقمة بن قيس بن عبد الله النخعي الكوفي ثقة ثبت فقيه عابد

‘Alqamah b. Qays b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Nakha’ī al-Kūfī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), *thabt* (accurate), *faqīh* (a jurist), ‘*ābidun* (a great worshipper of Allāh).¹⁸⁰

With this, it is absolutely clear and undeniable that Ibn Mas’ūd’s report that the Ṣaḥābah used to consider ‘Alī as the overall best among them has an impeccably *ṣaḥīḥ* chain. All the narrators are *thiqah*, and the chain is fully and perfectly connected.

Even then, the same *athar* has been recorded with a second *ṣaḥīḥ* chain in that same *Faḍāil al-Ṣaḥābah*:

حدثنا عبد الله قال حدثني جدي قتنا أبو قطن قتنا شعبة عن أبي إسحاق عن عبد الله بن يزيد عن علقمة عن عبد الله وهو بن مسعود قال : كنا نتحدث ان أفضل أهل المدينة علي بن أبي طالب

‘Abd Allāh (b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Baghawī) – **my grandfather** (Aḥmad b. Munī’ al-Baghawī) – **Abū Qaṭan** – Shu’bah – Abū Ishāq – ‘Abd Allāh b. Yazīd – ‘Alqamah – ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas’ūd:

“We used to say that **the overall best** of the people of Madīnah was ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.”¹⁸¹

We already know the status of Shu’bah, Abū Ishāq and Alqamah. So, let’s find out about these new names.

This is al-Ḥāfiẓ’s verdict on the first narrator of this new *sanad*:

عبد الله بن محمد بن عبد العزيز أبو القاسم البغوي الحافظ الصدوق مسند عصره
...قلت وقد وثقه البارقطني والخطيب وغيرهما قال الخطيب كان ثقة ثبتا مكثرًا فهمًا
عارفًا قلت الرجل ثقة مطلقًا

‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Abū al-Qāsim al-Baghawī: *Al-*

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 687, # 4697

¹⁸¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Faḍāil al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1403 H) [annotator: Dr. Waṣīyullah Muḥammad ‘Abbās], vol. 2, p. 646, # 1097

ḥāfiẓ, *al-ṣadūq* (the extremely truthful), the top scholar of his time.... I (al-‘Asqalānī) say: He has been declared *thiqah* (trustworthy) by al-Daraqutnī, al-Khatīb and others. Al-Khatīb said, “He was *thiqah* (trustworthy), accurate, and narrated a lot (of *ahādīth*)”.... I (al-‘Asqalānī) say: The man is absolutely *thiqah* (trustworthy).¹⁸²

Concerning his grandfather, al-Ḥāfiẓ further submits:

أحمد بن منيع بن عبد الرحمن أبو جعفر البغوي.... ثقة حافظ

Aḥmad b. Munī’ b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman, Abū Ja’far al-Baghwī....: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), *ḥāfiẓ*.¹⁸³

Abū Qaṭan too is *thiqah* (trustworthy), as confirmed by al-Ḥāfiẓ:

عمرو بن الهيثم بن قطن ... أبو قطن البصري ثقة

‘Amr b. al-Haytham b. Qaṭan ... Abū Qaṭan al-Baṣrī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy).¹⁸⁴

Of course, ‘Abd Allāh b. Yazīd was a junior Ṣaḥābī, and therefore needed no investigation. He is automatically *thiqah* (trustworthy). Al-Ḥāfiẓ states:

عبد الله بن يزيد بن زيد بن حصين الأنصاري الخطمي بفتح المعجمة وسكون المهملة صحابي صغير ولي الكوفة لابن الزبير.

‘Abd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Zayd b. Ḥuṣayn al-Anṣārī al-Khaṭmī: a junior Ṣaḥābī. He was the *walī* (ruler) of Kūfah for Ibn al-Zubayr.¹⁸⁵

So, we have a second impeccable *sanad* for the *ḥadīth*.

¹⁸² Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān* (Beirut: Manshūrāt Muassasat al-‘Ālamī li al-Maṭbū‘āt; 2nd edition, 1390 H), vol. 3, pp. 338-339, # 1339

¹⁸³ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabḍīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 47, # 114

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 748, # 5146

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 547, # 3715

13 ḤADĪTH AL-TAFDĪL

SHAYKH IBN TAYMIYYAH RAISES OBJECTIONS

Our Shaykh (d. 728 H) is obviously not comfortable with the fact that the Ṣaḥābah used to consider Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, to be superior to Abū Bakr during the lifetime of the Prophet, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ālihi*. So, he fights back:

الشيعية الأولى أصحاب علي لم يكونوا يرتابون في تقديم أبي بكر وعمر عليه كيف وقد ثبت عن علي من وجوه متواترة أنه كان يقول خير هذه الأمة بعد نبيها أبو بكر وعمر ولكن كان طائفة من شيعة علي تقدمه على عثمان وهذه المسألة أخفى من تلك ولهذا كان أئمة أهل السنة كلهم متفقين على تقديم أبي بكر وعمر من وجوه متواترة كما هو مذهب أبي حنيفة والشافعي ومالك وأحمد بن حنبل والثوري والأوزاعي والليث بن سعد وسائر أئمة المسلمين من أهل الفقه والحديث والزهد والتفسير من المتقدمين والمتأخرين

The early Shī’īs, the companions of ‘Alī, did not doubt the superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar over him. How can they when it has been narrated in *mutawātir* reports from ‘Alī that he used to say: “The best of this Ummah after its Prophet are Abū Bakr and ‘Umar”? However, some of the Shī’īs of ‘Alī used to consider him superior to ‘Uthmān, and this issue is more unclear than that. This is why all the Imāms of the Ahl al-Sunnah were unanimous on the superiority of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar as reported in *mutawātir* reports. This was the view of Abū Ḥanīfah, Shāfi‘ī, Mālik, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, al-Thawrī, al-

Awzāʾī, al-Layth b. Saʿd and all the other Imāms of the Muslims, from the jurists, the *ḥadīth* experts, the ascetics and the exegetes, from the early and later generations.¹⁸⁶

Here, he is taking the battle even to the Shīʿī home ground! According to him, not a single one of those that are followed by the Ahl al-Sunnah, including the Ṣaḥābah and Tābiʿīn, *ever* believed that Amīr al-Mūminīn was superior to either Abū Bakr or ʿUmar. There was absolute unanimity among them concerning the superiority of the duo over ʿAlī. Moreover, even the early Shīʿīs – whom he identified as the companions of Amīr al-Mūminīn – shared the same view! Rather, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib himself used to teach his followers that Abū Bakr and ʿUmar were the best of the Ummah after its Messenger. Therefore, all the early Sunnīs and Shīʿīs had a full consensus that both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar were better than ʿAlī in the Sight of Allāh.

So, did Ibn Masʿūd tell a lie? We will soon find out which party is telling the truth, and which is not. Our Shaykh proceeds:

وقد ثبت في الصحيحين عن عبد الله بن عمر قال كنا نفاضل على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أبو بكر ثم عمر ثم عثمان وفي لفظ ثم ندع أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا نفاضل بينهم فهذا إخبار عما كان عليه الصحابة على عهد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من تفضيل أبي بكر ثم عمر ثم عثمان وقد روى أن ذلك كان يبلغ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فلا ينكره

It has been authentically transmitted in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* from ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar that he said: “We used to consider Abū Bakr to be the best during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, and then ʿUmar, and then ʿUthmān” and in another version, “Then we would leave all the other Ṣaḥābah of the Prophet, peace be upon him, **and we did not consider any of them to be superior to another.**” This is information concerning what the Ṣaḥābah believed during the lifetime of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in that they considered Abū Bakr to be the most superior, then ʿUmar, and then ʿUthmān. It has been narrated that this reached the Prophet, peace be upon him, and he did not oppose it.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 2, pp. 72-73

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 6, p. 153

The plot deepens considerably here. There is a direct contradiction between the reports of Ibn Mas‘ūd and Ibn ‘Umar. One of them, definitely, was *incorrectly* attributing things to his colleagues. As such, we must investigate their irreconcilable claims in order to determine which of them reflects the true story.

Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) has documented the submission of Ibn ‘Umar:

حدثني محمد بن حاتم بن يزيغ حدثنا شاذان حدثنا عبد العزيز ابن أبي سلمة
الماجشون عن عبيد الله عن نافع عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما قال : كنا في زمن
النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم لا نعدل بأبي بكر أحدا ثم عمر ثم عثمان ثم ترك
أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم لا نفاضل بينهم.

Muḥammad b. Ḥatim b. Bazīg – Shādhān – ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Abī Salamah al-Mājīshūn – ‘Ubayd Allāh – Nāfi’ – Ibn ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with them both:

During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, we never considered anyone as equal to Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, and then ‘Umar. Then, we leave the Ṣaḥābah of the Prophet, peace be upon him, **and we did not consider any of them to be superior to another.**¹⁸⁸

In simpler terms, the Ṣaḥābah – as alleged by Ibn ‘Umar – viewed Abū Bakr to be their best, then ‘Umar, and then ‘Uthmān. Apart from the trio, those Ṣaḥābah did not consider *any* other among them to be superior to another. Without doubt, this *ḥadīth* targets Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī, as it places him on the same level with *all* other Ṣaḥābah, apart from the three *khalīfahs*. Al-Bukhārī has even *attributed* a similar report to him:

حدثنا محمد بن كثير أخبرنا سفيان حدثنا جامع بن أبي راشد حدثنا أبو يعلى عن
محمد ابن الحنفية قال : قلت لأبي أي الناس خير بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و
سلم ؟ قال أبو بكر قلت ثم من ؟ قال ثم عمر وخشيت أن يقول عثمان قلت ثم
أنت ؟ قال ما أنا إلا رجل من المسلمين

¹⁸⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J‘ufī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 3, p. 1352, # 3494

Muḥammad b. Kathīr – Sufyān – Jāmi’ b. Abī Rāshid – Abū Ya’lā – Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyah:

I asked my father (‘Alī), “Who is the best of mankind after the Messenger of Allāh?” He replied, “Abū Bakr.” I said, “Then who?” He replied, “‘Umar.” I feared that he would (also) mention ‘Uthmān. So, I asked, “Then you?” He replied, “**I am only an ordinary Muslim.**”¹⁸⁹

This report, however, makes no sense in line with ‘Alī’s documented opinions of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar! Imām Muslim (d. 261 H), for instance, quotes the second *khalīfah* saying to both Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī and ‘Abbās:

فلما توفي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال أبو بكر أنا ولي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فرأيتكم كاذبا آتما غادرا خائنا والله يعلم إنه لصادق بار راشد تابع للحق ثم توفي أبو بكر وأنا ولي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وولي أبي بكر فرأيتاني كاذبا آتما غادرا خائنا

When the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, died, **Abū Bakr said: “I am the *walī* of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him.”.... So both of you (‘Alī and ‘Abbās) thought him (i.e. Abū Bakr) to be a liar, sinful, treacherous and dishonest.** And Allāh knows that he was really truthful, pious, rightly-guided and a follower of the truth. **Abū Bakr died and I became the *walī* of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, and the *walī* of Abū Bakr. So both of you thought me to be a liar, sinful, treacherous and dishonest.**¹⁹⁰

He considered both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar as sinful, treacherous and dishonest liars! How then could he possibly have graded both people as the best of the Ummah? Does it make sense that Amīr al-Mūminīn thought that sinful, treacherous and dishonest liars were better than himself and everyone else?! Besides, on what basis would he have declared himself an *ordinary* Muslim – equal with all others - despite everything that Allāh and His Prophet had publicly and privately said about him? We believe that Imām ‘Alī was an outstandingly intelligent, sincere believer in Allāh and His Messenger, who could never have made such illogical comments. What we find, therefore, in the books of the Ahl al-Sunnah concerning his alleged admission of the superiority of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar over himself are only cheap polemical stunts pulled by some enthusiastic Sunnīs.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 3, p. 1342, # 3468

¹⁹⁰ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1376, #1757

However, in the case of Ibn ‘Umar, what has been transmitted from him coincides perfectly with his character and beliefs. He certainly believed in the superiority of Abū Bakr, then his father ‘Umar, and then ‘Uthmān, above all other Ṣaḥābah. Moreover, he never recognized the *khilāfah* of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, citing a self-made excuse, as al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) confirms:

وإنما لم يذكر ابن عمر خلافة علي لأنه لم يبايعه لوقوع الاختلاف عليه كما هو مشهور في صحيح الاخبار وكان رأى أنه لا يبايع لمن لم يجتمع عليه الناس ولهذا لم يبايع أيضا لابن الزبير ولا لعبد الملك في حال اختلافهما وبايع يزيد بن معاوية ثم لعبد الملك بن مروان بعد قتل بن الزبير

Ibn ‘Umar did not mention the *khilāfah* of ‘Alī only because he did not give *bay’ah* (oath of allegiance) to the latter, due to the difference of opinions concerning him as it is well-known in the *ṣaḥīḥ* reports. His (Ibn ‘Umar’s) view was that he would not give *ba’yah* to anyone who was not universally acknowledged (as *khilāfah*) by all the people. This was why he also did not give *bay’ah* to Ibn al-Zubayr and ‘Abd al-Malik during their disagreement. **And he gave *ba’yah* to Yazīd b. Mu’āwiyah**, and then to ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān after the killing of Ibn al-Zubayr.¹⁹¹

His excuse, of course, was defeated by his *ba’yah* to Yazīd b. Mu’āwiyah, the killer of Imām al-Ḥusayn. The *khilāfah* of Yazīd was never universally accepted. This was why there were repeated revolts against him anyway, resulting in infamous episodes in Islāmic history – such as his massacres in Makkah and Madīnah, and at Karbalā. Interestingly, like his pretext for delegitimizing the *khilāfah* of Amīr al-Mūminīn, Ibn ‘Umar’s claim that the Ṣaḥābah never considered anyone among themselves as superior to another - apart from Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān - lacks truth! The reality is far different. For instance, Allāh states:

لا يستوي القاعدون من المؤمنين غير أولي الضرر والمجاهدون في سبيل الله بأموالهم وأنفسهم فضل الله المجاهدين بأموالهم وأنفسهم على القاعدين درجة وكلا وعد الله الحسنى وفضل الله المجاهدين على القاعدين أجرا عظيما درجات منه

Not equal are those of the believers who sit (i.e. do not participate in

¹⁹¹ Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah li al-Ṭabā’ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 5, p. 18

jihād) - except those who are disabled - and those who do *jihād* in the Cause of Allāh with their wealth *and* their lives. **Allāh has made those who do *jihād* with their wealth *and* their lives superior in (spiritual) rank above those who sit.** Unto each, Allāh has promised good. But Allāh has made those who do *jihād* to be superior to those who sit with a huge reward, ranks from Him.¹⁹²

The Ṣaḥābah were in two groups: those who participated in *jihād* with their wealth *and* lives and those who held back. Allāh declared the former to be superior above the latter in ranks. Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī, of course, never voluntarily missed the battlefield, and he equally *never* fled – not even once – no matter how deadly things became. Moreover, although he was poor, he still spent his little wealth in the Way of Allāh. By contrast, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān have been authentically documented to have fled the battlefield at various times! In other words, they were escaping *with their lives* from *jihād*. They might have done *jihād* with their wealth – which is debatable, anyway. However, they certainly were not doing it *with their lives*. So, why on earth would the Ṣaḥābah place Abū Bakr above ‘Alī, despite Allāh’s clear verdict? Did they not believe in the Qur’ān? Worse still, why would they consider Amīr al-Mūminīn to be equal in rank with those of the Ṣaḥābah who used to flee from the battlefield, and with those who used to stay away from *jihād*?

The Qur’ān adds:

وما لكم ألا تتفقوا في سبيل الله ولله ميراث السماوات والأرض لا يستوي منكم من أنفق من قبل الفتح وقاتل أولئك أعظم درجة من الذين أنفقوا من بعد وقاتلوا وكلا وعد الله الحسنى والله بما تعملون خبير

And what is the matter with you that you do not spend in the Way of Allāh? And to Allāh belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the Conquest (of Makkah), **these ones are higher in (spiritual) rank than those who spent and fought afterwards.** But to all, Allāh has promised the best. And Allāh is All-Aware of what you do.¹⁹³

Yet, the Ṣaḥābah – according to Ibn ‘Umar – did not believe this verse! Therefore, they used to consider ‘Alī, who spent and fought *before* the Conquest of Makkah, as equal with others among them who only spent and

¹⁹² Qur’ān 4:95-96

¹⁹³ Qur’ān 57:10

fought *after* it. It is indeed a lose-lose situation for our Sunnī brothers. If they agreed that the Ṣaḥābah believed in and practised the above verses, then they must reject the report of Ibn ‘Umar as only his mere wishful thinkings and hallucinations. On the other hand, if they chose to believe Ibn ‘Umar, in such a case, they would be left with no other choice but to proclaim the *kufr* of the Ṣaḥābah!

14 ḤADĪTH AL-TAFDĪL

IS ‘ĀISHAH REALLY THE BEST OF THE UMMAH?

Officially, Abū Bakr is the best of this Ummah, after its Prophet, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaibi wa ‘āliibi*, according to the Ahl al-Sunnah. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) for instance submits:

قلت: وكون أبي بكر رضي الله عنه أحب الناس إليه صلى الله عليه وسلم هو
الموافق لكونه أفضل الخلفاء الراشدين عند أهل السنة

I say: the fact that Abū Bakr, may Allāh be pleased with him, was the most beloved of **mankind** to him (i.e. the Prophet), peace be upon him, is consistent with the fact that he was the best of the rightly guided *khalīfahs* in the view of the Ahl al-Sunnah.¹⁹⁴

However, this belief directly contradicts their “authentic” *ḥadīth*. Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن حماد قال أنا عبد العزيز بن المختار عن خالد
الحذاء عن أبي عثمان قال حدثني عمرو بن العاص قال بعثني رسول الله صلى الله
عليه و سلم على جيش ذات السلاسل قال فأتيته قال قلت يا رسول الله أي

¹⁹⁴ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍa‘īfah wa al-Manqū‘ah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fī al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 3, p. 255, # 1124

الناس أحب إليك قال عائشة قال قلت من الرجال قال أبوها إذا قال قلت ثم من قال عمر

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yaḥyā b. Ḥamād – ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. al-Mukhtār – Khālīd al-Khadhā’ – Abū ‘Uthmān – ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, appointed me as commander of the army of Dhāt Salāsīl. So, I got to him, and said, “O Messenger of Allāh, which of **mankind** is the most beloved to you?” He replied, “‘Āishah.” I said, “Who among the men?” He replied, “Her father.” I asked, “Then who?” He replied, “‘Umar”.¹⁹⁵

Al-Arnāūṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.¹⁹⁶

In other words, Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah is the overall best of this Ummah, *above* Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān, according to the Sunnī-only report. It is, however, at this point that things get really messy! Allāh has stated concerning two of the wives of His Prophet:

وإذا أسر النبي إلى بعض أزواجه حديثاً فلما نبأت به وأظهره الله عليه عرف بعضه وأعرض عن بعض فلما نبأها به قالت من أنبأك هذا قال نبأني العليم الخبير إن تتوبا إلى الله فقد صغت قلوبكما وإن تظاهرا عليه فإن الله هو مولاه وجبريل وصالح المؤمنين والملائكة بعد ذلك ظهير عسى ربه إن طلقكن أن يبدله أزواجاً خيراً منكن مسلمات مؤمنات فانتات تائبات عابدات ساجدات ثيبات وأبكاراً

And when the Prophet disclosed a matter *in confidence* to one of his wives, so when she told it, and Allāh made it known to him, he informed part thereof and left a part. Then when he told her thereof, she said, “Who told you this?” He said, “The All-Knower, the All-Aware has told me.” **If you two repent to Allāh, for your hearts have deviated. But if you both help each other *against* him, then**

¹⁹⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 4, p. 203, # 17844

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*

Allāh is His Helper (against you both), and Jibrīl, and the righteous believers, and furthermore, the angels are his helpers. It may be if he divorced you that his Lord will give him instead of you, **wives better than you**: Muslims, believers, obedient, repentant, devoted, fasting – whether previously married or virgins.¹⁹⁷

Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 H) has this exegesis:

ثم خاطب عائشة وحفصة، فقال: {إن تتوبا إلى الله} أي: من التعاون على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بالإيذاء {فقد صغت قلوبكما} قال ابن عباس: زأغت، وأثمت. قال الزجاج: عدلت، وزأغت عن الحق. قال مجاهد: كنا نرى قوله عز وجل: {فقد صغت قلوبكما} شيئاً هيناً حتى وجدناه في قراءة ابن مسعود: فقد زأغت قلوبكما.

Then He (Allāh) addresses **‘Āishah and Ḥafṣah**, saying: {If you both repent to Allāh}, meaning **from helping each other against the Messenger of Allāh to hurt him**. {For your hearts have deviated} Ibn ‘Abbās said: “They (the hearts) deviated (*ṣagḥbat*) and committed a sin.” Al-Zajāj said, “**They (the hearts) deviated, and deviated from the Truth.**” Mujāhid said, “We used consider His Words, the Almighty {for your hearts have deviated} has something easy until we found it in the recitation of Ibn Mas’ūd as: {for your hearts have deviated (*ṣagḥbat*)}.”¹⁹⁸

Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) also records:

حدثنا هارون بن سعيد الأيلي حدثنا عبدالله بن وهب أخبرني سليمان (يعني ابن بلال) أخبرني يحيى أخبرني عبيد ابن حنين أنه سمع عبدالله بن عباس يحدث قال مكثت سنة وأنا أريد أن أسأل عمر بن الخطاب عن آية فما أستطيع أن أسأله هيبه له حتى خرج حاجا فخرجت معه فلما رجع فكنا ببعض الطريق عدل إلى الأراك لحاجة له فوقفت له حتى فرغ ثم سرت معه فقلت يا أمير المؤمنين من اللتان تظاهرتا على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من أزواجه ؟ فقال تلك حفصة وعائشة

¹⁹⁷ Qur’ān 66:3-5

¹⁹⁸ Abū al-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Jawzī al-Qurshī al-Baghdādī, *Zād al-Masīr fī ‘Ilm al-Tafsīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Abd Allāh], vol. 8, p. 52

Hārūn b. Saʿīd al-Aylī – ‘Abd Allāh b. Wahb – Sulaymān b. Bilāl – Yaḥyā – ‘Ubayd b. Ḥunayn – ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās:

I hesitated for a (whole) year, and I had intended to ask ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb concerning a verse. But I could not ask him out of fear of him, until he went out for *Hajj* and I accompanied him. During his return, while we were still on the way, he stepped aside towards an *Arāk* tree to ease himself. So, I waited for him until he finished. I then walked along with him, and said, “O Amīr al-Mūminīn! Who were the two women who helped each other *against* the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, among his wives?” He replied, “**They were Ḥafṣah and ‘Āishah.**”¹⁹⁹

There are three things here:

1. Both ‘Āishah, and especially Ḥafṣah, *betrayed* the confidence of the Messenger of Allāh.
2. Both of them literally helped each other *against* him in order to hurt him.
3. The hearts of both of them had deviated from the Truth. This is very obvious, anyway. No one with a clean heart would *ever* help another *against* the Messenger in any circumstance.

Interestingly, the above verses were the *last* updates by Allāh on the hearts of both women. Nothing else was revealed thereafter by Him to discharge them, or to indicate their repentance. It is a matter of great interest then that the deviation of their hearts means they both have little or no hope of salvation in the Hereafter:

يوم لا ينفع مال ولا بنون إلا من أتى الله بقلب سليم

The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, **except him who brings to Allāh a clean heart.**²⁰⁰

The perturbing question here is: how is ‘Āishah the best of this Ummah, after its Prophet, despite that she was a deviant in the Sight of Allāh? Are our Sunnī brothers telling us that Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were

¹⁹⁹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 2, p. 1105, # 1479 (31)

²⁰⁰ Qur’ān 26:88-89

worse than deviants? Besides, Allāh mentions the existence of women who would be *better* wives to His Prophet; if case he divorced ‘Āishah and Ḥafṣah. Does this fact alone not debunk the Sunnī *aḥādīth* on the superiority of Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah as mere sectarian polemical artwork?

15 ḤADĪTH SALŪNĪ

INVESTIGATING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

أما قول علي سلوني فإنما كان يخاطب بهذا أهل الكوفة ليعلمهم العلم والدين فإن غالبهم كانوا جهالا لم يدركوا النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم وأما أبو بكر فكان الذين حول منبره هم اكابر أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم الذين تعلموا من رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم العلم والدين فكانت رعية أبي بكر أعلم الأمة وأدينها وأما الذين كان علي يخاطبهم فهم من جملة عوام الناس التابعين وكان كثير منهم من شرار التابعين ولهذا كان علي رضي الله عنه يذمهم ويدعو عليهم وكان التابعون بمكة والمدينة والشام والبصرة خيرا منهم

As for the statement of ‘Alī “Ask me”, he only addressed this to the people of Kūfah to teach them knowledge and the religion, because most of them were ignorant people who never met the Prophet, peace be upon him. As for Abū Bakr, those who were around his pulpit were the most senior of the Ṣaḥābah of the Prophet, peace be upon him, who learnt knowledge and the religion from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. So, the subjects of Abū Bakr were the most knowledgeable of the *Ummah* and the best in religious practice. However, those whom ‘Alī was addressing, they were commoners among the Ṭābi’īn, and a lot of them were the evil ones among the Ṭābi’īn. This was why ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, criticized and cursed them, and the Ṭābi’īn in Makkah, Madīnah, Syria and

Baṣra were better than them.²⁰¹

He equally adds:

فقول علي لمن عنده بالكوفة سلوني هو من هذا الباب لم يقل هذا لابن مسعود
ومعاذ وأبي بن كعب وأبي الدرداء وسلمان وأمثالهم فضلا عن أن يقول ذلك لعمر
وعثمان ولهذا لم يكن هؤلاء ممن يسأله فلم يسأله قط لا معاذ ولا أبي ولا ابن مسعود
ولا من هو دونهم من الصحابة

The statement of ‘Alī “Ask me” to those with him in Kūfah was in this regard. **He never said this to Ibn Mas’ūd, Mu’ādh, Ubayy b. Ka’b, Abū Dardā, Salmān or others like them**, much less saying that to ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān. This is why these people were not among those who asked him. **They never asked him (anything) – not Mu’ādh, not Ubayy, not Ibn Mas’ūd and not others from the Ṣaḥābah.**²⁰²

It is obvious from the words of our dear Shaykh that he accepts the authenticity of *Ḥadīth Salīmī*. He is not calling it “a lie” or “a fabrication”, or *ḍa’if* or similar terms. Rather, he conceded that the event did happen. However, he attempts to downplay the unmatched significance of the *ḥadīth*. To him, there is nothing special in it. After all, Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī, *‘alaḥi al-salām*, was – according to our Shaykh – only offering that challenge to ignorant, evil people. He never dared present it to *any* of the Ṣaḥābah! By contrast, Abū Bakr displayed his knowledge in the blessed presence of the most knowledgeable and the best of this entire *Ummah*.

In order to weigh the positives and negatives of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s submissions, we must first understand the context of *Ḥadīth Salīmī*. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 H) helps on this:

قال شعبة بن الحجاج ، عن سَمَک ، عن خالد بن عَرَّرة أنه سمع عليا وشعبة أيضا ،
عن القاسم بن أبي بزة ، عن أبي الطَّيْل ، سمع عليًا . وثبت أيضا من غير وجه ، عن
أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب : أنه صعد منبر الكوفة فقال : لا تسألوني عن آية
في كتاب الله ، ولا عن سنة عن رسول الله ، إلا أنبأتكم بذلك .

²⁰¹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 5, p. 507-508

²⁰² *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 57

Shu’bah b. al-Ḥajjāj, from Simāk, from Khālīd b. ‘Ar’arah that he heard ‘Alī; and Shu’bah again narrated from al-Qāsim b. Abī Barraḥ from Abū al-Tufayl that he heard ‘Alī; and IT IS ALSO AUTHENTICALLY TRANSMITTED through many chains that Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib climbed the pulpit of Kūfah and said, “**You will not ask me about ANY verse in the Book of Allāh, or about ANY Sunnah from the Messenger of Allāh, except that I will inform you of that.**”²⁰³

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) also records:

أخبرنا أبو الحسن علي بن محمد بن عقبة ثنا الحسن بن علي بن عفان ثنا محمد بن
عبيد الطناسي ثنا بسم بن عبد الرحمن الصيرفي ثنا أبو الطفيل قال رأيت أمير
المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه قال على المنبر فقال : سلوني قبل أن لا
تسألوني ولن تسألوا بعدي مثلي

Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Uqbah – al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. ‘Affān – Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayd al-Ṭanāfasī – Bassām b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Ṣayarfī – Abū al-Ṭufayl:

I saw Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, saying on the pulpit, “Ask me before you are no longer able to ask me, **and you will NEVER be able to ask ANYONE like me after me.**”²⁰⁴

Al-Ḥākim says:

حديث صحيح الإسناد

A *ḥadīth* with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) agrees:

صحيح

²⁰³ Abū al-Fidā Ismā‘īl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr al-Qurshī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* (Dār al-Ṭaybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah], vol. 7, p. 413

²⁰⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 2, p. 506, # 3736

*Ṣaḥīḥ*²⁰⁵

Imām Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 H) further documents:

حدثنا ابن المثنى، قال: ثنا محمد بن جعفر، قال: ثنا شعبة، عن القاسم بن أبي بزة، قال: سمعت أبا الطفيل، قال: سمعت علياً رضي الله عنه يقول: لا تسألوني عن كتاب ناطق، ولا سنة ماضية، إلا حدثتكم، فسأله ابن الكواء عن الذاريات، فقال: هي الرياح.

Ibn al-Muthannā – Muḥammad b. Jaʿfar – Shuʿbah – al-Qāsim b. Abī Bazzah – Abū al-Ṭufayl:

I heard ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, saying, “**You will not ask me about ANY articulate Book or ANY bygone Sunnah, except that I will tell you.**” So, Ibn al-Kawā asked him about *al-Zāriyāt*, and he replied, “It is the winds”.²⁰⁶

This same *sanad* is relied upon by Imām Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

حدثنا محمد بن المثنى ومحمد بن بشار (واللفظ لابن المثنى) قالوا حدثنا محمد بن جعفر حدثنا شعبة قال سمعت القاسم بن أبي بزة يحدث عن أبي الطفيل

Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā and Muhammad b. Bashār – Muḥammad b. Jaʿfar – Shuʿbah – al-Qāsim b. Abī Bazzah – Abū al-Ṭufayl²⁰⁷

This should be sufficient to establish the status of the above report as *ṣaḥīḥ*. However, the *athar* proves a very heavy fact – that ‘Alī knew *everything* in all revealed scriptures as well as everything in the *Sunnah* of every single prophet and messenger till the Seal of them. This naturally includes the *Ṣuḥūf*, the *Tanwrah*, the *Zabūr*, the *Injil*, and the Qurʾān. Amīr al-Mūminīn had perfect knowledge of them all. He also had complete knowledge of the

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*

²⁰⁶ Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd b. Kathīr b. Ghālīb al-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī, *Jamī al-Bayān fī Tawīl al-Qurʾān* (Dār al-Fikr; 1415 H) [annotator: Ṣadafī Jamīl al-ʿAttār], vol. 26, p. 240

²⁰⁷ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-ʿArabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ʿAbd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1567, #1978 (45)

Sunnah of every single one of the 124,000 prophets sent by Allāh. Due to the significance of this *athar*, we will *further* confirm its authenticity to remove any possible doubts about it.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) says about its first narrator:

محمد بن المثنى بن عبيد العزى بفتح النون والزاي أبو موسى البصري.... ثقة ثبت

Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā b. ‘Ubayd al-‘Unazā, Abū Mūsā al-Baṣrī...
***Thiqah* (trustworthy), *thabt* (accurate).**²⁰⁸

Al-Ḥāfiẓ also has these comments about the second narrator:

محمد بن جعفر الهذلي البصري المعروف بغندر ثقة صحيح الكتاب إلا أن فيه غفلة

Muḥammad b. Ja’far al-Hazalī al-Baṣrī, better known as Ghandar:
Thiqah* (trustworthy), *ṣaḥīḥ al-kitāb (i.e. *aḥādīth* from his books are *ṣaḥīḥ*) except that there was some negligence in him.²⁰⁹

Whatever negligence he had does not affect his *aḥādīth* from Shu’bah, the third narrator, at all. He used to accurately record the latter’s reports. So, he narrated them from his books with perfect precision. Al-Ḥāfiẓ provides further information in this respect:

وقال ابن مهدي كنا نستفيد من كتب غندر في شعبة وكان وكيع يسميه الصحيح الكتاب. وقال أبو حاتم عن محمد بن ابان البلخي قال ابن مهدي غندر أثبت في شعبة مني وقال ابن المبارك إذا اختلف الناس في حديث شعبة فكتاب غندر حكم بينهم وقال ابن أبي حاتم سألت أبي عن غندر فقال كان صدوقا وكان مؤدبا وفي حديث شعبة ثقة

Ibn Mahdī said: “We used to benefit from the books of Ghandar on **Shu’bah**. Wakī’ named him *ṣaḥīḥ al-kitāb*.” Abū Ḥātim narrated from Muḥammad b. Abān al-Balakhī that Ibn Mahdī said: “**Ghandar is more accurate than me as far as Shu’bah is concerned.**” Ibn al-Mubārak said, “**When the people disagree about the *ḥadīth* of Shu’bah, the**

²⁰⁸ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Taḥdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 2, p. 129, # 6283

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 63, # 5805

book of Ghandar used to judge between them.” Ibn Abī Ḥātim said: “I asked my father about Ghandar and he replied, ‘He was *ṣadūq* (very truthful), and was a teacher and in the *ḥadīth* of Shu’bah, he is *thiqah* (trustworthy).’”²¹⁰

The third narrator, Shu’bah, is a pillar of Sunnī *aḥādīth*. Al-Ḥāfiẓ gives the catch-phrases about him:

شعبة بن الحجاج بن الورد العتكي مولاهم أبو بسطام الواسطي ثم البصري ثقة حافظ
متقن كان الثوري يقول هو أمير المؤمنين في الحديث

Shu’bah b. al-Ḥajjāj b. al-Ward al-‘Atkī, their freed slave, Abū Bustām al-Wāsiṭī, al-Baṣrī: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy), ḥāfiẓ (a ḥadīth scientist), extremely precise.** Al-Thawrī used to say: “He was the *amīr al-mūminīn* (the supreme leader) in *al-Ḥadīth*.”²¹¹

This is what al-Ḥāfiẓ establishes about the fourth narrator as well:

القاسم بن أبي بزة يفتح الموحدة وتشديد الزاي المكي مولى بني مخزوم القارئ ثقة

Al-Qāsim b. Abī Bazzah al-Makkī, free slave of Banū Makhzūm, the Qārī (the Qur’ān reciter): ***Thiqah* (trustworthy).**²¹²

The last narrator, Abū al-Tufayl, was a Ṣaḥābī. So, normally, he was absolutely *thiqah* (trustworthy) by Sunnī standards. Al-Ḥāfiẓ affirms his status:

عامر بن واثلة بن عبد الله بن عمرو بن جحش الليثي أبو الطفيل وربما سمي عمرا ولد
عام أحد ورأى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وروى عن أبي بكر فمن بعده وعمر إلى أن
مات سنة عشر ومائة على الصحيح وهو آخر من مات من الصحابة قاله مسلم
وغيره.

‘Āmir b. Wāthilah b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Amr b. Jaḥsh al-Laythī, Abū al-

²¹⁰ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 9, p. 85, # 129

²¹¹ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabḍīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 418, # 2798

²¹² *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 18, # 5469

Ṭufayl. Perhaps, he was named Amr. **He was born during the year of Uḥud, and he saw the Prophet, peace be upon him.** He narrated from Abū Bakr and all those after him. He lived till 110 H, based upon the correct opinion, **and was the last of the Ṣaḥābah to die, according to (Imām) Muslim and others.**²¹³

This last fact reveals the fallacy of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s claim that Amīr al-Mūminīn never presented the challenge to any of the Ṣaḥābah! Abū al-Ṭufayl was in the mosque when Imām ‘Alī made his declaration, and none was excluded from it. We will further investigate this particular unfounded submission of our dear Shaykh, in greater detail, later.

Let us now examine the fourth *ṣaḥīḥ* report of *Ḥadīth Ṣalīnī* from the Sunnī books. Imām ‘Abd al-Razzāq records:

عبد الرزاق عن معمر عن وهب بن عبد الله عن أبي الطفيل قال شهدت عليا وهو
يخطب وهو يقول سلوني فوالله لا تسألوني عن شيء يكون إلى يوم القيامة إلا
حدثتكم به وسلوني عن كتاب الله فوالله ما من آية إلا وأنا أعلم بليل نزلت أم بنهار
أم في سهل أم في جبل

‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – Wahb b. ‘Abd Allāh – Abū al-Ṭufayl:

I witnessed ‘Alī while he was delivering a sermon and saying, “**Ask me! I swear by Allāh, you will not ask me about ANYTHING that will occur up till the Day of Resurrection except that I will inform you of it.** Ask me about the Book of Allāh. I swear by Allāh, there is NOT a single verse except that I know whether it was revealed during the night or during the day, or on a level land or on a mountain.”²¹⁴

Al-Ḥāfiẓ states about the first narrator:

عبد الرزاق بن همام بن نافع الحميري مولا هم أبو بكر الصنعاني ثقة حافظ

‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām b. Nāfi’ al-Ḥumayrī, their freed slave, Abū

²¹³ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 464, # 3122

²¹⁴ ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣana’ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Rushd; 1st edition, 1410 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Muslim Muḥammad], vol. 3, p. 241

Bakr al-Ṣanʿānī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **ḥāfiẓ** (a ḥadīth scientist).²¹⁵

He also says about the second narrator:

معمر بن راشد الأزدي مولاهم أبو عروة البصري نزيل اليمن ثقة ثبت فاضل

Maʿmar b. Rāshid al-Azdī, their freed slave, Abū ʿUrwah al-Baṣrī, he lived in Yemen: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **thabt** (accurate), **fāḍil** (meritorious).²¹⁶

What about the third narrator? This is his verdict:

وهب بن عبد الله بن أبي دبي بموحدة مصغرا الهنائي بضم الهاء ونون ومد الكوفي
وقد ينسب لجدّه ثقة

Wahb b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Dubayy al-Hunāī al-Kūfī, he has been attributed to his grandfather: **Thiqah** (trustworthy).²¹⁷

We already know about Abū al-Ṭufayl. So, this fourth *riwāyah* too is *ṣaḥīḥ*.

A simple summary of the *atbār* is this:

1. ʿAlī challenged the people to ask him about *anything*. He never limited the challenge. Rather, he left it open: “Ask me!”
2. He claimed *perfect* knowledge of the Qurʾān and Sunnah, as well as of all the revealed scriptures of the past prophets and their respective Sunnahs.
3. He also encouraged them to ask him about *anything* that would occur till the Hour. He had complete knowledge of that too.
4. He specifically warned the people after once he died, there would *never* be anyone like him again till the Day of Resurrection.

Apparently, this goes beyond merely scaring some ignorant, evil fellows with some limited knowledge. Rather, the question is: was/is anyone else *ever* capable of making similar claims?

²¹⁵ Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-ʿIlmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā], vol. 1, p. 599, # 4078

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 202, # 6833

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 292, # 7505

16 ḤADĪTH SALŪNĪ

IMPLICATIONS OF THE REPORTS

The first and only creature to have *ever* made claims and offered challenges similar to those in *Ḥadīth Salūnī* was the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa wa ālihi*. Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records:

وحدثني حرملة بن يحيى بن عبدالله بن حرملة بن عمران التجيبي أخبرنا ابن وهب أخبرني يونس عن ابن شهاب أخبرني أنس بن مالك أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خرج حين زاعت الشمس فصلى لهم صلاة الظهر فلما سلم قام على المنبر فذكر الساعة وذكر أن قبلها أموراً عظيماً ثم قال من أحب أن يسألني عن شيء فليسألني عنه فوالله لا تسألوني عن شيء إلا أخبركم به ما دمت في مقامي هذا قال أنس بن مالك فأكثر الناس البكاء حين سمعوا ذلك من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأكثر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يقول سلوني فقام عبدالله بن حذافة فقال من لي؟ يا رسول الله قال أبوك حذافة فلما أكثر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يقول سلوني برك عمر فقال رضيينا بالله ربنا وبالإسلام ديننا وبمحمد رسولا قال فسكت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين قال عمر ذلك ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أولى والذي نفس محمد بيده لقد عرضت علي الجنة والنار آتفا في عرض هذا الحائط فلم أر كاليوم في الخير والشر

Ḥarmala b. Yahyā b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥarmala b. ‘Imrān al-Tajībī – Ibn Wahb – Yūnus – Ibn Shihāb – Anas b. Mālik:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, came out when the sun had passed the meridian, and led them in *Ṣalāt al-Zuhr*. When he said the *salām*, he stood upon the pulpit, and mentioned the Hour, and mentioned great affairs that would occur before it. Then he said, **“Whosoever wishes to ask me about ANYTHING, let him ask me. I swear by Allāh, you will not ask me about ANYTHING except that I will inform you of it as long as I remain in this position of mine.”** So, the people wept a lot when they heard that from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. **Then the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, repeatedly said “Ask me!” several times.** So, ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥudhāfah stood up and said, “Who is my father, O Messenger of Allāh?” He (the Prophet) replied, “Your father is Ḥudhāfah.” When the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, continuously repeated “Ask me!” several times, ‘Umar knelt down and said, “We are well-pleased with Allāh as Lord, and with Islām as religion, and with Muḥammad as Messenger.” So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, kept quiet so long as ‘Umar was saying that. Then the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “It is near. I swear by the One in Whose Hand the life of Muḥammad is, there was presented to me the Paradise and the Hellfire in the nook of this enclosure, and I did not see as much good and evil as I have seen today.”²¹⁸

Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) also records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا بن أبي عدي عن حميد عن أنس قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا تسألوني عن شيء إلى يوم القيامة إلا حدثكم قال فقال عبد الله بن حذافة يا رسول الله من أبي قال أبوك حذافة

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Ibn Abī ‘Adī – Ḥamīd – Anas:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, **“You will not ask me about ANYTHING (that will occur) up till the Day of Resurrection except that I will tell you.”** So, ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥudhāfah said, “O Messenger of Allāh, who is my father?” He replied, “Your father is Ḥudhāfah.”²¹⁹

²¹⁸ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 1832, # 2359 (136)

²¹⁹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūtī], vol. 3, p. 107, # 12063

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *ṣaḥiḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.²²⁰

These were momentous words. He offered them a challenge that was clearly beyond human capability. The Ṣaḥābah were awed. They never fathomed the existence of a man who could answer *any* question about *anything* – *any* verse in *any* revealed scripture, *any* Sunnah of *any* prophet, *any* private secrets of anyone, science, medicine, technology, astronomy, and so on. Anything! Nothing whatsoever was excluded. They were challenged to ask *anything* about *anything*! ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥudhāfah exploited the opportunity to verify his paternity – which, of course, was part of “anything”. The other Ṣaḥābah were too overwhelmed with awe to ask any question. The Prophet kept challenging them. But, all that they could do was weep. If anyone makes a similar challenge today, he would be humiliated immediately with very simple questions. The only creature that was capable of making the same challenge as the Messenger of Allāh had done was none other than Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaibi al-salām*.

This relevant *athar* is documented in *Faḍāil al-Ṣaḥābah* of Imām Aḥmad:

حدثنا عبد الله نا عثمان بن أبي شيبة نا سفيان عن يحيى بن سعيد قال أراه عن
سعيد : قال لم يكن أحد من أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم يقول سلوني إلا
علي بن أبي طالب

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – ‘Uthmān b. Abī Shaybah – Sufyān – Yahyā b. Sa‘īd – Sa‘īd: “There was never anyone among the Ṣaḥābah of the Prophet, peace be upon him, who used to say “Ask me!” except ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.²²¹

Dr. ‘Abbās comments:

²²⁰ *Ibid*

²²¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Faḍāil al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1st edition, 1403 H) [annotator: Dr. Waṣiyullāh Muḥammad ‘Abbās], vol. 2, p. 646, # 1098

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*²²²

As for Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, both of them did not even have sufficient knowledge of either the Qur’ān or Sunnah – much less anything else! For instance, ‘Umar did not know the basic Islāmic ruling on *tayammum*. Imām Muslim records:

حدثني عبدالله بن هاشم العبدى حدثنا يحيى (يعني ابن سعيد القطان) عن شعبة قال حدثني الحكم عن زر عن سعيد بن عبد الرحمن بن أبزي عن أبيه أن رجلا أتى عمر فقال: إني أجنب فلم أجد ماء فقال لا تصل

‘Abd Allāh b. Hishām al-‘Abdī – Yahyā b. Sa‘īd al-Qaṭṭān – Shu‘bah – al-Ḥakam – Dharr – Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abza – his father:

A man came to ‘Umar and said: “I have seminal discharges and I cannot find water (to do the *ghusl*)”. **He (‘Umar) said, “Do not perform *Ṣalāt*.”**²²³

Meanwhile, this is the answer to that question in the Qur’ān:

وإن كنتم مرضى أو على سفر أو جاء أحد منكم من الغائط أو لامستم النساء فلم تجدوا ماء فتيمموا صعيدا طيبا فامسحوا بوجوهكم وأيديكم

And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes after answering the call of nature, or **you have had sexual intercourse with women and you cannot find water, perform *tayammum* with clean soil and rub therewith your faces and hands.**²²⁴

‘Umar apparently did not know the verses, or even the explicit Prophetic traditions which also explain the matter. As such, it was naturally impossible for him to have issued *any* challenge to *any* people to ask him *anything*! He completely lacked the capability, and would have been instantly humiliated with such beginner’s topics as *tayammum*. Moreover, as Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) records below, ‘Umar also lacked knowledge of some other topics in

²²² *Ibid*

²²³ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 1, p. 280, #112

²²⁴ Qur’ān 4:43 and 5:6

Islāmic jurisprudence:

حدثنا أحمد بن أبي رجاء حدثنا يحيى عن أبي حيان التميمي عن الشعبي عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما قال: خطب عمر على منبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال إنه قد نزل تحريم الخمر وهي من خمسة أشياء العنب والتمر والحنطة والشعير والعسل والخمر ما خامر العقل . وثلاث وددت أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لم يفارقنا حتى يعهد إلينا عهدا الجذ والكلالة وأبواب من أبواب الربا

Aḥmad b. Abī Rajāh – Yaḥyā – Abū Ḥayyān al-Tamīmī – Shu’bī – Ibn ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with them both:

‘Umar delivered a sermon on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying, “Verily, there was revealed an order making alcohol *ḥarām*, and it is made from five things: grape, date, wheat, barley and honey. Alcohol is whatsoever clouds the mind. **I wish the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, had not left us before he could explain three matters to us: the inheritance of the grandfather, *kalālah* and various types of *ribā* (usury).**”²²⁵

But, it was not only ‘Umar. Abū Bakr too, as the *khalīfah* – and therefore the chief religious authority of the Muslims, was asked a beginner’s question by one of his subjects. It however turned out that the *khalīfah* actually had no clue! Allāh states:

فلينظر الإنسان إلى طعامه أنا صببنا الماء صبا ثم شققنا الأرض شققا فأنبتنا فيها حبا وعنبا وقضبا وزيتونا ونخلا وحدائق غلبا وفاكهة وأبا متاعا لكم ولأنعامكم

That We pour forth water in abundance, and We split the earth in clefts, and We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and clover plants, and olives and date-palms, and gardens, dense with many trees, and fruits and **herbage**, a benefit for you and your cattle.²²⁶

The above verse is in plain Arabic. Allāh reveals about His Book:

هذا لسان عربي مبين

²²⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 5, p. 2122, # 5266

²²⁶ Qur’ān 80:25-32

This (Qur’ān) is a **clear** Arabic tongue.²²⁷

إنا أنزلناه قرآنا عربيا لعلكم تعقلون

We have sent it down as **an Arabic Qur’ān in order that you may understand**.²²⁸

إنا جعلناه قرآنا عربيا لعلكم تعقلون

Verily, We have made it a Qur’ān **in Arabic that you may be able to understand**.²²⁹

Therefore, anyone with a proficient knowledge of the Arabic language will always understand the verses of the Qur’ān – at least in their literal senses – perfectly. During the *ḵhalāfah* of Abū Bakr, a man came to him about the word “herbage” in the above passage. He did not understand what it meant. Perhaps, the man was a Persian, Roman or African. It is also possible that he was an Arab, but one without a sound knowledge of his native language. So, how did the *ḵhalāfah* explain to him?

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852 H) records:

ومن وجه آخر عن إبراهيم النخعي قال قرأ أبو بكر الصديق وفاكهة وأبا فقيلا ما الأب فقيلا كذا وكذا فقال أبو بكر ان هذا له التكلف أي أرض تقلني أو أي ساء تظلني إذا قلت في كتاب الله بما لا أعلم وهذا منقطع بين النخعي والصديق وأخرج أيضا من طريق إبراهيم التيمي ان أبا بكر سئل عن الأب ما هو فقال أي ساء تظلني فذكر مثله وهو منقطع أيضا لكن أحدهما يقوي الآخر

And it is narrated from another chain on the authority of Ibrāhīm al-Nakha’ī:

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq recited “and fruits and herbage”. So, someone asked, “What is herbage?” Another person answered, “It is so-and-so”. Therefore, Abū Bakr said, **“This one (i.e. this question) is overburdensome. Which earth will carry me and which sky will**

²²⁷ Qur’ān 16:103

²²⁸ Qur’ān 12:2

²²⁹ Qur’ān 43:3

shield me if I say concerning the Book of Allāh THAT WHICH I HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF.” This is *munqati*’ (disconnected) between al-Nakhaṭī and al-Ṣiddīq. It is also recorded through the route of Ibrāhīm al-Tamīmī that **Abū Bakr was asked about herbage, what it was**, and he replied, “Which sky would shield me....” and he mentioned the like of it (i.e. what Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaṭī narrated). This one too is *munqati*’. **However, each one of the two (reports) STRENGTHENS the other.**²³⁰

So, Abū Bakr, despite being from Quraysh – who spoke the purest Arabic dialect – did not know what “herbage” meant in the Qur’ān! Apparently, though an Arab, the first Sunnī *khalīfah* had deficient knowledge of his own native language. Considering that the Book of Allāh was revealed in “clear” Arabic, that fact alone naturally made him an incompetent interpreter of the divine Scripture.

‘Umar too had a similar condition. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) records:

حدثنا أبو عبد الله بن يعقوب ثنا إبراهيم بن عبد القمي أن يزيد بن هارون أنبا حميد عن أنس وحدنا أبو عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا إسحاق أنبا يعقوب بن إبراهيم بن سعد ثنا أبي عن صالح عن ابن شهاب أن أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه أخبره أنه سمع عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه يقول - { فأنبئتنا فيها حبا * وعنبا وقضبا * وزيتونا ونخلا * وحدائق غلبا * وفاكهة وأبا } قال : فكل هذا قد عرفناه فما الأب ثم نقض عصا كانت في يده ؟ فقال : هذا لعمر الله التكلف اتبعوا ما تبين لكم من هذا الكتاب

Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. Ya’qūb – Ibrāhīm al-Tamīmī – Yazīd b. Hārūn – Ḥamīd – Anas:

And Abū ‘Abd Allāh – my father – Ishāq – Ya’qūb b. Ibrāhīm b. Sa’d – my father – Ṣāliḥ – Ibn Shihāb – Anas b. Mālik, may Allāh be pleased with him:

I heard ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, reciting {And We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and clover plants, and olives and date-palms, and gardens, dense with many trees, and fruits and herbage}. He said, “We have known all of this. But, what is

²³⁰ Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah li al-Tabā’ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 13, pp. 229-230

“herbage”? Then, he broke a stick which was in his hand. So, he said,
 “This, I swear by the Life of Allāh, IS OVERBURDENSOME.
 Follow (only) what is clear to you from this Book.”²³¹

Al-Ḥākim says:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.²³²

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) concurs:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim²³³

For Allāh’s sake, was it possible for Abū Bakr or ‘Umar to issue a challenge like this:

لا تسألوني عن آية في كتاب الله ، ولا عن سنة عن رسول الله ، إلا أنبأتكم بذلك

You will not ask me about ANY verse in the Book of Allāh, or about ANY Sunnah from the Messenger of Allāh, except that I will inform you of that.

²³¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 559, # 3897

²³² *Ibid*

²³³ *Ibid*

17 ḤADĪTH SALŪNĪ

DID THE ṢAḤĀBAH ASK ‘ALĪ?

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) claims:

أما قول علي سلوني ... وأما الذين كان علي يخاطبهم فهم من جملة عوام الناس
التابعين وكان كثير منهم من شرار التابعين

As for the statement of ‘Alī “Ask me” ... those whom ‘Alī was addressing, **they were commoners among the Tābi’īn**, and a lot of them were the evil ones among the Tābi’īn.²³⁴

He clarifies further:

فقول علي لمن عنده بالكوفة سلوني هو من هذا الباب لم يقل هذا لابن مسعود
ومعاذ وأبي بن كعب وأبي الدرداء وسلمان وأمثالهم.... فلم يسأله قط لا معاذ ولا أبي
ولا ابن مسعود ولا من هو دونهم من الصحابة

The statement of ‘Alī “Ask me” TO THOSE WITH HIM IN KŪFAH was in this regard. He never said this to Ibn Mas’ūd, Mu’adh, Ubayy b. Ka’b, Abū Dardā, Salmān or others like them.... **They never asked him (anything) – not Mu’adh, not Ubayy, not Ibn Mas’ūd**

²³⁴ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muassasat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 5, p. 507-508

and NOT others from the Ṣaḥābah.²³⁵

The patent purpose of the above submissions is to downplay the importance of Amīr al-Mūminīn's, *'alaihi al-salām*, challenge. However, what really mattered was the *quality* of the challenge, and not its audience. As we have demonstrated, neither Abū Bakr nor 'Umar was ever capable of issuing the same challenge as Amīr al-Mūminīn did, not even to school kids. Meanwhile, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah is actually wrong in his claims concerning the people of Kūfah, and the Ṣaḥābah, with regards to the challenge of 'Alī.

To get a clearer picture, let us present this narration of Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) :

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا حسين بن محمد وأبو نعيم المعنى قالاً ثنا فطر عن أبي الطويل قال: جمع علي رضي الله تعالى عنه الناس في الرحبة ثم قال لهم أنشد الله كل امرئ مسلم سمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول يوم غدیر خم ما سمع لما قام فقام ثلاثون من الناس وقال أبو نعيم فقام ناس كثير فشهدوا حين أخذه بيده فقال للناس أتعلمون انی أولى بالمؤمنين من أنفسهم قالوا نعم یا رسول الله قال من كنت مولاه فهذا مولاه اللهم وال من والاه وعاد من عاداه قال فخرجت وكان في نفسي شيباً فلقيت زيد بن أرقم فقلت له انی سمعت علياً رضي الله تعالى عنه يقول كذا وكذا قال فما تنكر قد سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول ذلك له

'Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad and Abū Na'īm al-Ma'anī – Faṭr – Abū al-Ṭufayl:

'Alī, may Allāh the Most High be pleased with him, gathered people at Raḥbah (an area in Kūfah), and said to them, "I implore with Allāh to testify every single Muslim who heard what the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said while standing on the Day of Ghadīr Khumm. **So, thirty people stood up - Abū Na'īm said: lots of people stood up – and testified** that while holding his (i.e. 'Alī's) hand, he (the Prophet) said to the people, "Do you know that I am more entitled to the believers than themselves?" They replied, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh." He (the Prophet) said, "Whosoever I am his *mawlā*, this too is his *mawlā*. O Allāh, be the friend of whosoever is his friend, and be the

²³⁵ *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 57

enemy of whosoever is his enemy.”²³⁶

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ states:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*²³⁷

All those thirty – or actually, lots of - people who stood up to testify were Ṣaḥābah, and they were among the people of Kūfah! The challenge of Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī was directed towards them too, along with the other residents of the city. This reality cuts off the first leg of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s apparently fallacious submission.

At this point, it becomes imperative to ask. Did the Ṣaḥābah ever consult Amīr al-Mūminīn to gain knowledge in their religion? Our dear Shaykh claims that they never did. But, is that the case? ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) replies:

أخرجه ابن أبي شيبة في " المصنف " (2/44/11) من طريق سعيد بن المسيب: " أن رجلا من أهل الشام يقال له (ابن حبري) وجد مع امرأته رجلا فقتلها , أو قتلها , فرفع إلى معاوية فأشكل عليه القضاء في ذلك , فكتب إلى أبي موسى أن سل عليا عن ذلك , فسأل أبو موسى عليا

Ibn Abī Shaybah recorded it in *al-Musnaf* (2/44/11) from the route of Saʿīd b. Jubayr:

A Syrian man called Ibn Ḥabrī caught a man with his wife, and therefore killed him or killed both of them. So, his case was brought to Muʿāwiyah. However, he had problem on how to do justice in that. **As such, he wrote to Abū Mūsā to ask ‘Alī concerning that. Therefore, Abū Mūsā asked ‘Alī.**²³⁸

²³⁶ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shuʿayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 4, p. 370, # 19321

²³⁷ *Ibid*

²³⁸ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Irvā al-Ghālil fī Takhrīj Aḥādīth Manār al-Sabīl* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1405 H), vol. 8, p. 28, # 2361

²³⁸ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 7, p. 274, # 2216

The ‘Allāmah comments:

قلت: ورجاله ثقات , لكن سعيد بن المسيب مختلف في سماعه من علي.

I say: **Its narrators are trustworthy.** However, there is disagreement over whether Saʿīd b. Musayyab heard from ‘Alī or not.²³⁹

Of course, the correct opinion is that he heard from ‘Alī, as declared by al-Hāfiẓ:

سعيد بن المسيب بن حزن بن أبي وهب بن عمرو بن عائذ بن عمران ابن مخزوم
القرشي المخزومي .روى عن أبي بكر مرسلًا وعن عمر وعثمان وعلي وسعد بن أبي
وقاص....

Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab b. Ḥuzn b. Abī Wāḥb b. ‘Amr b. ‘Āiz b. ‘Imrān b. Makhzūm al-Qurshī al-Makhzūmī. He narrated from Abū Bakr in a *mursal* form, and from ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, **‘Alī**, Saʿīd b. Abī Waqqās....²⁴⁰

It was only from Abū Bakr that he did not hear directly. As for ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and *all* the other people from whom Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab heard, they are grouped together in the same unbroken, long list of names. Moreover, Imām al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 H) records this chain:

حدثنا أحمد بن منيع حدثنا إسماعيل بن إبراهيم حدثنا علي بن زيد عن سعيد بن
المسيب عن علي بن أبي طالب

Aḥmad b. Munī’ – Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm – ‘Alī b. Yazīd – **Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab – ‘Alī b. Abi Ṭālib.**²⁴¹

Al-Tirmidhī notably comments:

حديث علي حسن صحيح

²³⁹ *Ibid*

²⁴⁰ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb* (Dār al-Fīkr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 4, p. 74, # 145

²⁴¹ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 3, p. 452, # 1146

The *ḥadīth* of ‘Alī is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*.²⁴²

‘Allāmah al-Albānī backs him:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*²⁴³

Simply put, the *athar* from *al-Muṣṣaḥ* of Ibn Abī Shaybah has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain. It is a very interesting narration, indeed. Mu’āwiyah – a Ṣaḥābī – was the rebel leader who was waging war against Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī, the *khalīfah*. Yet, despite his bloody insurgency, he turned to ‘Alī for solution to his judicial problem. That was an extreme step, which revealed Mu’āwiyah’s unconditional acknowledgement that ‘Alī’s knowledge was unmatched and unique. Moreover, Abū Mūsā, whom Mu’āwiyah sent, was another Ṣaḥābī who could have offered a solution if he had any! This incident effectively buries the remains of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s claims.

But, there is more! The second rebel leader who also waged a bloody campaign against ‘Alī was Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah. Imām Aḥmad records another interesting narration:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا عبد الرزاق أخبرنا سفيان عن عمرو بن قيس عن الحكم عن القاسم بن مخيمرة عن شريح بن هانئ قال: أتيت عائشة رضي الله عنها أسألها عن الحفين فقالت عليك بآب أبي طالب فأسأله فإنه كان يسافر مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأتيته فسأله

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Sufyān – ‘Amr b. Qays – al-Ḥakam – al-Qāsim b. Makhīrah – Shurayḥ b. Ḥānī:

I went to ‘Āishah, may Allāh be pleased with her, and asked her about the two *khuff*s. So, she said, “**You MUST go to Ibn Abi Ṭālib and ask him**, because he used to go on journeys with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him.” **So, I went to him and asked him.**²⁴⁴

²⁴² *Ibid*

²⁴³ *Ibid*

²⁴⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muassasat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūt], vol. 1, p. 146, # 1244

Al-Arnāuṭ says:

إسناده صحيح على شرط مسلم

Its chain is *ṣaḥiḥ* upon the standard of (Imām) Muslim.²⁴⁵

Imām Abū Yaʿlā (d. 307 H) further documents:

حدثنا أبو خيثمة حدثنا أبو معاوية حدثنا الأعمش عن الحكم عن القاسم بن مخيمرة عن
شرح بن هانئ قال: سألت عائشة عن المسح على الخفين فقالت: أتت عليا فسله
فإنه كان أعلم بذلك مني فأتيت عليا فسألته عن المسح

Abū Khaythamah – Abū Muʿāwiyah – Al-Aʿmash – al-Ḥakam – al-
Qāsim b. Makhīrah – Shurayḥ b. Hānī:

I asked ʿĀishah concerning wiping over the two *khuffs*. So, she said, “Go to ʿAlī and ask him, because he is more knowledgeable of that than me.” So, I went to ʿAlī and asked him about the wiping.²⁴⁶

Shaykh Dr. Asad comments:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥiḥ*²⁴⁷

One crucial point here is that Shurayḥ b. Hānī was a Ṣaḥābī too. Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) states:

شرح بن هانئ بن يزيد بن نهيك ويقال شرح بن هانئ بن يزيد بن الحارث بن كعب
الحارثي أبو المقدام أدرك النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

Shurayḥ b. Hānī b. Yazīd b. Nuḥayk, and he is called Shurayḥ b. Hānī b.
Yazīd b. al-Ḥārith b. Kaʿb al-Ḥārithī, Abū al-Miqdām: **He met the**

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*

²⁴⁶ Abū Yaʿlā Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 1, p. 229, # 264

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*

Prophet, peace be upon him.²⁴⁸

Do we really have to make any further comments at this point? Perhaps, we should just close things with these words of Imām Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630 H):

وروى يزيد بن هارون عن قطر عن أبي الطفيل قال قال بعض أصحاب النبي لقد
كان لعلي من السوابق ما لو أن سابقة منها بين الخلائق لوسعتهم خيرا وله في هذا
أخبار كثيرة تقتصر على هذا منها ولو ذكرنا ما سألته الصحابة مثل عمر وغيره رضي
الله عنهم لأطلنا

Yazīd b. Hārūn narrated from Faṭr from Abū al-Ṭufayl who said, “Some of the Ṣaḥābah of the Prophet said: ‘There are certain unmatched qualities and ranks of ‘Alī that if any of them had been distributed among all creation, it would bring good to all of them’. There are LOTS of reports in this regard in his favour. We are only mentioning a few. **If we had mentioned what the Ṣaḥābah, such as ‘Umar and others, may Allāh be pleased with them, had asked him, we would have cited a lot!**”²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamayyūz al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1415 H) [annotators: Shaykh ‘Ādil Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and Shaykh ‘Alī Muḥammad Ma’ūḍ], vol. 3, p. 307-308, # 3991

²⁴⁹ Ibn al-Athīr, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Shaybānī al-Jazarī, *Usd al-Ghabah* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1417 H) [annotator: ‘Ādil Aḥmad al-Rufā’ī], vol. 4, p. 110

18 ḤADĪTH AL-‘ILM

ESTABLISHING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) claims:

قال الرافضي الثالث انه كان اعلم الناس بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم

و الجواب أن اهل السنة يمنعون ذلك و يقولون ما اتفق عليه علماءهم أن اعلم
الناس بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم أبو بكر ثم عمر و قد ذكر غير واحد
الإجماع على أن أبا بكر اعلم الصحابة كلهم

The Rāfiḍī said: “The third (point) is that he (‘Alī) is the most knowledgeable of mankind after the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him.”

The answer is that the Ahl al-Sunnah reject that and say what their scholars unanimously agree upon that **the most knowledgeable of mankind after the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, was Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar.** Several people have mentioned the consensus upon the fact that Abū Bakr was the most knowledgeable of all the Ṣaḥābah altogether.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 7, p. 500

It is one thing to make a claim. It is another for it to be valid. In exactly what way was Abū Bakr, for instance, more knowledgeable than Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*? ‘Alī is the best judge of this entire *Ummah* – a far better judge than either Abū Bakr or ‘Umar. Justice dispensation, of course, requires very advanced knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Since Amīr al-Mūminīn was a better judge than both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, he definitely had better knowledge of the Book of Allāh and the traditions of His Messenger, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālihi*, than the duo. Moreover, while ‘Alī had perfect knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, as well as that of all previous Scriptures and Sunnahs, and issued public challenges to this effect, neither Abū Bakr nor ‘Umar even knew the meaning of “herbage” in the Book of Allāh! ‘Umar, in particular, lacked knowledge of such topics in Islāmic jurisprudence as *tayammum*, *kalālah*, *ribā*, inheritance of the grandfather, and whether pregnancy could be only for six months or not! Yet, he was supposedly more knowledgeable than ‘Alī according to the weird logic of some folks.

Our dear Shaykh has cited a general Sunnī clerical consensus about Abū Bakr’s scientific superiority over the *Ummah*. The key question, however, is whether the Messenger of Allāh was part of this consensus. If he was not, then such an agreement lacks *any* merit. Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) records the Prophet’s opinion on the matter:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا أبو أحمد ثنا خالد يعني بن طهمان عن نافع بن أبي نافع عن معقل بن يسار قال: وضأت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ذات يوم فقال هل لك في فاطمة رضي الله عنها تعودها فقلت نعم فقام متوكئا علي فقال أما انه سيحمل ثقلها غيرك ويكون أجرها لك قال فكأنه لم يكن على شيء حتى دخلنا على فاطمة عليها السلام فقال لها كيف تجدينك قالت والله لقد اشتد حزني واشتدت فاقتي وطال سقمي قال أبو عبد الرحمن وجدت في كتاب أبي بخط يده في هذا الحديث قال أو ما ترضين أني زوجتك أقدم أمتي سلما وأكثرهم علما وأعظمهم علما

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Hanbal) - Abū Aḥmad – Khālid b. Ṭahmān – Nāfi’ b. Abī Nāfi’ – Ma’qil b. Yasār:

I was with the Prophet, peace be upon him, one day. Then he said, “Would you like to visit Fāṭimah, may Allāh be pleased with her?” I said, “Yes.” So, he stood up, leaning on me, and said, “But, someone else apart from you will soon bear its weight and its reward will be for

you.” It was as though I was carrying nothing until we entered upon Fāṭimah, peace be upon her. He (the Prophet) said to her, “How do you feel?” She answered, “By Allāh, my grief has intensified, my want has worsened and my sickness has lasted long.” He said, “Are you not satisfied that I have married you to the one who was the first of my Ummah to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them, and the most clement of them?**”²⁵¹

Imām al-Haythamī (d. 807 H) states about this report:

رواه أحمد والطبراني برجال وثقوا

Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī recorded it **with narrators who have (all) been graded *thiqah* (trustworthy).**²⁵²

At another place, al-Haythamī again comments on the same *ḥadīth* with the same chain:

رواه أحمد والطبراني وفيه خالد بن طهّان وثقه أبو حاتم وغيره وبقيّة رجاله ثقات

Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī narrated it. **In the chain is Khālid b. Ṭahmān. Abū Ḥātim and others declared him *thiqah* (trustworthy).** The remaining narrators are (all) *thiqah* (trustworthy).²⁵³

But Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ disagrees:

إسناده ضعيف

Its chain is *ḍaʿīf*.²⁵⁴

Strangely, al-Arnāuṭ gives no reason for his verdict, especially in the case of such a sensitive *ḥadīth*! Meanwhile ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) seems to have noticed this omission. In his *al-Ḍaʿīfah*, after quoting the exact report above, the ‘Allāmah states:

²⁵¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shuʿayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 5, p. 26, # 20322

²⁵² Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawāʾid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, pp. 147-148, # 14669

²⁵³ *Ibid*, vol. 9, p. 123, # 14595

²⁵⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shuʿayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 5, p. 26, # 20322

أخرجه أحمد (26 /5) ، ومن طريقه ابن عساكر (12 /89 /1) .

قلت: وهذا إسناد ضعيف؛ رجاله ثقات؛ غير خالد بن طهمان يخضعه الاكثر. وقال ابن معين: "ضعيف خلط قبل موته بعشر سنين، وكان قبل ذلك ثقة".

Aḥmad (5/26) recorded it, and from his route Ibn Asākir (12/89/1).

I say: **This chain is *ḍaʿīf*. Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), except Khālīd b. Ṭahmān for the majority declared him *ḍaʿīf*. Ib Maʿīn said, "He is *ḍaʿīf*. He became confused ten years before his death. But, before that he was *thiqah* (trustworthy)."**²⁵⁵

So, both Imām al-Haythamī and ‘Allāmah al-Albānī agree that all the narrators except Khālīd were *thiqah* (trustworthy). However, while al-Haythamī maintains that even Khālīd was graded unconditionally *thiqah* (trustworthy), al-Albānī argues that the majority actually considered him *ḍaʿīf*. In a rather weird move, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī makes no attempt to, at least, list out the names of some of these "majority". The best that he has offered is only one name: Yahyā b. Maʿīn! Interestingly, the same ‘Allāmah even goes ahead to refute himself elsewhere:

وأما أبو العلاء الخفاف واسمه خالد بن طهمان فهو صدوق، لكنه كان اختلط.

As for Abū al-‘Alā al-Khafāf, his name is Khālīd b. Ṭahmān, **and he is *ṣadūq* (very truthful), although he became confused.**²⁵⁶

This is the correct view, according to al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) as well:

خالد بن طهمان الكوفي وهو خالد بن أبي خالد وهو أبو العلاء الخفاف مشهور بكنيته صدوق ربي بالتشيع ثم اختلط

²⁵⁵ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍaʿīfah wa al-Mawḍūʿah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fi al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Maʿārif; 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 10, p. 535, # 4898

²⁵⁶ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shuybun min Fiḡhibah wa Fawāidibah* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Maʿārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 4, p. 630, # 1979

Khālīd b. Tahmān al-Kūfī, and he is Khālīd b. Abī Khālīd, and he is Abū al-‘Alā al-Khafāf, well-known with his *kunya* (nickname): **Ṣadūq** (very truthful), accused of Shī‘ism. **He later became confused.**²⁵⁷

Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) has the same opinion:

خالد بن طهمان أبو العلاء الكوفي، الخفاف عن أنس، وعدة، وعنه الفرياني، وأحمد بن يونس، صدوق شيعي، ضعفه ابن معين.

Khālīd b. Ṭahmān Abū al-‘Alā al-Kūfī, al-Khafāf, he narrated from Anas and a number (of others) while al-Faryābī and Aḥmad b. Yūnus (also) narrated from him: **Ṣadūq** (very truthful), a Shī‘ī. Ibn Ma‘īn declared him *ḍa‘īf*.²⁵⁸

Apparently, Khālīd was *thiqah* (trustworthy) or at least *ṣadūq* (very truthful). However, ten years before his death, his memory faded. In line with the Sunnī *ḥadīth* principles, when a reliable narrator with a failed memory transmits a report, we first ask if the specific report under study was narrated by him before or during his illness. If there is clear evidence that he transmitted the *ḥadīth* during his days with a sound memory, then it is accepted from him unconditionally. However, in all other cases, a further question is asked. Was his memory failure a serious one or not? The answer to that, as we will prove shortly, determines the final step. Meanwhile, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī here gives explanations on the case of a narrator with a *serious* memory failure:

قلت: وهو ثقة لولا اختلاطه، ومثله من المختلطين له ثلاث حالات:
 1 - أن يعرف أنه حدث بالحديث قبل الاختلاط.
 2 - أن يعرف أنه حدث به بعد الاختلاط.
 3 - أن لا يعرف عنه لا هذا ولا هذا.
 ففي الحالة الأولى فقط يحتاج به؛ دون الحالتين الآخرين.

I say: He is *thiqah* (trustworthy) despite his confusion. A confused

²⁵⁷ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 259, # 1649

²⁵⁸ Shams al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Dhahabī al-Dimashqī, *al-Kāshif fī Ma‘rifat Man Laḥu Riwāyat fī al-Kutub al-Sittah* (Jeddah: Dār al-Qiblah li al-Thaqāfat al-Islāmiyyah; 1st edition, 1413 H), vol. 1, p. 365, # 1330

narrator like him has three statuses:

1. To know that he narrated the *ḥadīth* before the confusion.
2. To know that he narrated the *ḥadīth* during the confusion.
3. Not knowing whether he narrated it before or after.

It is only in the first status that his *ahādīth* are accepted as *ḥujjah* (authority), and not in the other two statuses.²⁵⁹

The first question then is: did Khālīd narrate *Ḥadīth al-ʿIlm* to Abū Aḥmad before his confusion or otherwise?

There is a difference of opinion on this. For instance, Imām al-Ghazālī (d. 505 H) states:

والأحمد والطبراني من حديث معقل بن يسار وضأت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ذات يوم فقال هل لك في فاطمة تعودها الحديث وفيه أما ترضين أن زوجتك أقدم أمتي سلماً وأكثرهم علماً وأعظمهم علماً وإسناده صحيح

Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī narrated from the *ḥadīth* of Maʿqil b. Yasār: “I helped the Prophet, peace be upon him, to perform ablution one day. Then he said, ‘Would you like to visit Fāṭimah?’” Part of the *ḥadīth* is this: “‘Are you not satisfied that I have married you to the one who was the first of my Ummah to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them?’” **Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.**²⁶⁰

He apparently believes that Abū Aḥmad heard the *ḥadīth* from Khālīd before the latter’s confusion. Meanwhile, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī and Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ disagree. To them, he transmitted the report during the last ten years of his life. For the purpose of our research, we stick with the duo. Therefore, we will proceed in our investigation on the basis of an unproved assumption that Khālīd narrated *Ḥadīth al-ʿIlm* with a failed memory.

The next question then is: did Khālīd have a serious memory problem? Imām Ibn Ḥibbān says “no”:

²⁵⁹ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍaʿīfah wa al-Mawḍūʿah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fī al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Maʿārif; 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 12, p. 991, # 5995

²⁶⁰ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Ihyāʾ ʿUlum al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah), vol. 3, p. 273

خالد بن طهمان يخطئ ويهم

Khālīd b. Ṭahmān.... **He made mistakes and hallucinated.**²⁶¹

That expression is used only in mild cases. Where the memory failure is serious, the *muḥadithūn* of the Ahl al-Sunnah employ terms like “he made mistakes *a lot*”²⁶² and “he hallucinated *a lot*”²⁶³. Khālīd did NOT make mistakes *a lot*, and never hallucinated *a lot*. Truly, his memory failure caused him to make mistakes, and to hallucinate. But, things were never serious. His mistakes and hallucinations were only occasional. Therefore, he still transmitted completely authentic *aḥādīth* during those last ten years of his lifetime. So, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī tells us about another narrator who was exactly like Khālīd:

والجريري- واسمه سعيد بن إبّاس- محتج به في "الصحيحين"؛ وإن كان اختلط قبل موته بثلاث سنين، ولكن لم يفحش اختلاطه، وكأنه لهذا احتج به ابن حبان في "صحيحه" تبعاً لـ "الصحيحين"، وأكثر هو عنه، فثله ينبغي أن يحتج به ما لم يظهر خطؤه، فإذا توبع أو كان له شواهد- كما هو الشأن في حديثه هذا-؛ فلا يضر غرابته فيه إن شاء الله تعالى.

Al-Jurayrī – and his name is Sa’īd b. Iyās – IS RELIED UPON AS A ḤUJJAH IN THE TWO ṢAḤĪḤS, despite he became confused three years before his death. HOWEVER, HIS CONFUSION WAS NOT SERIOUS. Perhaps, it was for this reason that Ibn Ḥibbān has (also) relied upon him as a *ḥujjah* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, copying the two *Ṣaḥīḥs*, and has narrated a lot from him. **In the case of a narrator like him, it is appropriate to take him as a ḥujjah where his mistake is not evident.** So, where he is supported by another narrator in narrating the same report from the same person, or there are corroborating reports – as in the case of this *ḥadīth*

²⁶¹ Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad al-Tamīmī al-Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* (Hyderabad: Majlis Dāirat al-Ma’ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah; 1st edition, 1393 H), vol. 6, p. 257

²⁶² See for instance the case of al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Al-Aswad al-‘Ijlī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kūfī in Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 216, # 1336

²⁶³ See the case of ‘Aṭā b. Abī Muslim, Abū ‘Uthmān al-Khurasānī in Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 676, # 4616

– then his oddness does no harm to it *insbā Allāh Ta’lā*.²⁶⁴

Armed with this information, one can confidently say that *Ḥadīth al-ʿIlm*, as narrated by Khālīd – even without support or corroboration – is at least *ḥasan* in itself. Imām al-Tirmidhī²⁶⁵ and Shaykh Dr. Asad²⁶⁶ also grade the chain of Khālīd b. Ṭahmān as *ḥasan*, while Imām al-Ḥākim maintains that his *sanad* is actually solidly *ṣaḥīḥ*²⁶⁷. As such, the verdicts of both ‘Allāmah al-Albānī and Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ concerning *Ḥadīth al-ʿIlm* are hasty and contrary to evidence. What is more? There also are a lot of corroborating reports testifying for the *ḥadīth*!

‘Allāmah al-Hindī (d. 975 H) records one of such corroborating *aḥādīth*:

عن علي قال : خطب أبو بكر وعمر فاطمة إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأبى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عليهما فقال عمر : أنت لها يا علي قال : مالي من شيء إلا درعي وجملي وسيفي فتعرض علي ذات يوم لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال : يا علي هل لك من شيء ؟ قال : جملي ودرعي أرههما فروجني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فاطمة فلما بلغ فاطمة ذلك بكت فدخل عليها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال : ما لك تبكين يا فاطمة والله أنكحتك أكثرهم علما وأفضلهم حلما وأقدمهم سلما وفي لفظ : أولهم سلما

Narrated ‘Alī:

Abū Bakr and ‘Umar sought the hand of Fāṭimah in marriage from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. But, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, refused their proposals. So, ‘Umar said, “You are for her, O ‘Alī.” He (‘Alī) said, “What do I have apart from my

²⁶⁴ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqihāh wa Fawāidihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 7, p. 239, # 3089

²⁶⁵ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 4, p. 651, # 2484

²⁶⁶ Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Dārimī, *Sunan* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 2, p. 550, # 3425

²⁶⁷ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 4, p. 217, # 7422

armour, my camel and my sword?” So, ‘Alī approached the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, one day and he (the Prophet) said, “O ‘Alī! Do you have anything?” He replied, “My camel and my armour.” I mortgaged both of them. So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, married Fāṭimah to me. When the news got to Fāṭimah, she wept. As a result, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, went to her and said, “Why are you weeping, O Fāṭimah? I swear by Allāh, I have married you to **the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them, and the first of them to accept Islām.”²⁶⁸

Al-Hindī comments:

ابن جرير وصححه والبولاي في الذرية الطاهرة

Ibn Jarīr (al-Ṭabarī) recorded it **AND DECLARED IT ṢAḤĪḤ**. Al-Dawlābī also recorded it in *al-Dhurriyah al-Ṭabirah*.²⁶⁹

Imām al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H) records another:

حدثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم الديبري عن عبد الرزاق عن وكيع بن الجراح قال أخبرني شريك عن أبي إسحاق: أن عليا رضي الله عنه لما تزوج فاطمة رضي الله عنها قالت للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: زوجتني أعشى عظيم البطن فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: لقد زوجتكه وإنه لأول وأول أصحابي سلما وأكثرهم علما وأعظمهم حلما

Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Dabrī – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Wakī’ b. Al-Jarrāḥ – Sharīk – Abū Ishāq:

Verily, ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, when he married Fāṭimah, may Allāh be pleased with her, she said to the Prophet, peace be upon him, “You married me to a bleary-eyed man with a big belly.” So, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, “I have married you to him because he was the first of my Ṣaḥābah to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them.”²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ ‘Alī b. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanẓ al-Ummāl fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wa Afāl* (Beirut: Muassasat al-Risālah; 1989 H), vol. 13, p. 98, # 36370

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*

²⁷⁰ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad b. Ayūb al-Ṭabarānī, *Mu’jam al-Kabīr* (Mosul: Maktabah al-‘Ulūm wa al-Ḥukm; 2nd edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Ḥamadī b. ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salāfī], vol. 1, p. 94, # 156

Commenting on this report, Imām al-Haythamī states:

رواه الطبراني وهو مرسل صحيح الإسناد

Al-Ṭabarānī records it, and it is *mursal* **WITH A ṢAḤĪḤ CHAIN**.²⁷¹

²⁷¹ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, p. 124, # 14596

19 ḤADĪTH AL-‘ILM

PROVING ITS *TAWĀTTUR*

This *ḥadīth* has been narrated by a large number of the Ṣaḥābah. We will be presenting some of them, within the limits of the length of our book. To save space, we will be quoting only the chains and the words of the Prophet as reported by each Ṣaḥābī, except where doing this is unnecessary. Imām Ibn Asākir (d. 571 H) records the first *riwāyah*:

أخبرنا أبو القاسم بن السمرقندي أنا عاصم بن الحسن بن محمد بن عاصم أنا أبو عمر
بن مهدي أنا أبو العباس بن عقدة نا الفضل بن يوسف الجعفي نا محمد بن عكاشة
نا أبو المغراء وهو حميد بن المثني عن يحيى بن طلحة النهدي عن أيوب بن الحز
عن أبي إسحاق السبيعي عن الحارث عن علي قال:

إن فاطمة شكت إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال " ألا ترضين أني
زوجتك أقدم أمتي سلما وأحلمهم حلوا أكثرهم علما

Abū al-Qāsim b. Al-Samarqandī – ‘Āṣim b. Al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b.
‘Āṣim – Abū ‘Umar b. Maḥdī – Abū al-‘Abbās b. ‘Uqdah – al-Faḍl b.
Yūsuf al-Ju’fī – Muḥammad b. ‘Ukāshah – Abū al-Maghraḥ Ḥamīd b.
Al-Muthannā – Yaḥyā b. Ṭalḥah al-Hindī – Ayūb b. Al-Ḥizz – Abū
Ishāq al-Shabīrī – al-Ḥārith – ‘Alī:

Verily, Fāṭimah complained to the Messenger of Allāh. So he said,
“Are you not pleased that your husband was the first of my Ummah to

accept Islām, and the most clement of them, **and the most knowledgeable of them**”²⁷²

He records also:

أخبرنا أبو القاسم عبد الصمد بن محمد بن عبد الله أنا أبو الحسن علي بن محمد بن أحمد بن محمد بن موسى قال نا أحمد بن محمد بن سعيد بن عقدة نا أحمد بن يحيى وأحمد بن موسى بن إسحاق قال نا ضرار بن صرد نا عبد الكريم بن يعفور عن جابر عن أبي الضحى عن مسروق عن عائشة قالت حدثتني فاطمة ابنة محمد أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لها زوجتك أعلم المؤمنين علما وأقدمهم سلما وأفضلهم حلما

Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh – Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā – Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Uqdah – Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā and Aḥmad b. Mūsā b. Ishāq – Ḍarār b. Ṣird – ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Ya‘fūr – Jābir – Abū al-Duḥā – Masrūq – ‘Āishah:

Fāṭimah, the daughter of Muḥammad, told me that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said to her, “Your husband is **the most knowledgeable of the believers**, and the first of them to accept Islām, and the most clement of them.”²⁷³

Ibn Asākir proceeds to cite a further *sanad* for the report of ‘Āishah from Fāṭimah.²⁷⁴ Then he records:

أخبرنا أبو غالب بن البنا أنا أبو محمد الجوهري أنا أبو محمد عبد العزيز بن الحسن بن علي بن أبي صابر نا أبو حبيب العباس بن أحمد بن محمد البرقي نا إسماعيل يعني ابن موسى نا تليد بن سليمان أبو إدريس عن أبي الجحاف عن رجل عن أسماء بنت عميس قالت قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لفاطمة زوجتك أقدمهم سلما وأعظمهم حلما وأكثرهم علما

²⁷² Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Habat Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh, Ibn Asākir al-Shāfi‘ī, *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1415 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Shīrī], vol. 80, p. 113

²⁷³ *Ibid*, vol. 42, p. 132

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*

Abū Ghālib b. Al-Banā – Abū Muḥammad al-Jawharī – Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Abī Šābir – Abū Ḥabīb al-‘Abbās b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Bartī – Ismā‘īl b. Mūsā – Tulayd b. Sulaymān Abū Idrīs – Abū al-Jihāf – a man – **Asmā b. ‘Umayy**:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said to Fāṭimah: “Your husband was the first of them to accept Islām, and the most clement of them, **and the most knowledgeable of them.**”²⁷⁵

Of course, Imām Aḥmad documents his own report with a *ḥasan* chain:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا أبو أحمد ثنا خالد يعني بن طهان عن نافع بن أبي نافع عن معقل بن يسار قال.... قال أبو ما ترضين أني زوجتك أقدم أمتي سلما وأكثرهم علما وأعظمهم حلما

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) - Abū Aḥmad – Khālīd b. Ṭahmān – Nāfi’ b. Abī Nāfi’ – **Ma’qil b. Yasār**:

.... He (the Prophet) said (to Faatimah), “Are you not satisfied that I have married you to the one who was the first of my Ummah to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them?”²⁷⁶

Imām Ibn Asākir again records:

أخبرنا أبو نصر بن رضوان وأبو غالب بن البنا وأبو محمد عبد الله بن محمد بن نجاة قالوا أنا أبو محمد الجوهري أنا أبو بكر بن مالك نا العباس بن إبراهيم القراطيسي نا محمد بن إسماعيل الأحمسي نا مفضل بن صالح نا جابر الجعفي عن سليمان بن بريدة عن أبيه قال ... رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ... يا فاطمة أما ترضين أني زوجتك أقدمهم سلما وأكثرهم علما وأفضلهم حلما

Abū Naṣr b. Ridwān, Abū Ghālib b. Al-Banā and Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Najā – Abū Muḥammad al-Jawharī – Abū Bakr b. Mālik – al-‘Abbās b. Ibrāhīm al-Qarāṭīsī – Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Aḥmasī – Mufaḍḍal b. Šāliḥ – Jābir al-Ju’fī – Sulaymān b.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*, vol. 42, pp. 132-133

²⁷⁶ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 5, p. 26, # 20322

Buraydah – **his father (Buraydah):**

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said... “O Fāṭimah! Are you not pleased that your husband was the first of them to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them?”²⁷⁷

Imām al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H) has a relevant report too:

حدثنا محمد بن عثمان بن أبي شيبة ثنا محمد بن عبيد المحاربي ثنا عبد الكريم بن يعقوب عن جابر عن أبي الطفيل قال : قالت عائشة : اشتكى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في بيتي فأنته فاطمة تمشي والذي نفس عائشة بيده كأن مشيتها مشية رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فسارها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فبكت ثم سارها فضحكت فقلت : ما رأيت كالليوم ضحكا أقرب من بكاء فقلت : يا فاطمة أخبريني ما قال لك ؟ قالت : ما كنت أفعل وقد رأى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مكانك فلما توفي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سألتها فقالت : أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : إن جبريل كان يعارضني بالقرآن في كل سنة مرة وقد عارضني به العام مرتين ولا أراني إلا مدعوا به فأجيب فانقي الله قالت : فجزعت ثم سارني فقال : أما ترضين أن زوجك أول المسلمين إسلاما وأعلمهم علما فإنك سيدة نساء أمتي كما سادت مريم نساء قومها

Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Shaybah – Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayd al-Muḥārībī – ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Ya’qūb – Jābir – Abū al-Ṭufayl - **‘Āishah:**

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, complained in my room. So, Fāṭimah came to him, walking. I swear by the One in Whose Hand is ‘Āishah’s life, her style of walking was the same as that of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. Therefore, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, told her something privately. She therefore wept. Then he told her another thing privately, and she laughed. So, I said, “I do not think it is appropriate to laugh on a day like this, which is more deserving of weeping.” I said, “O Fāṭimah, tell me what he told you.” She replied, “I will not as long as the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, sees your place (i.e. is alive).” Therefore, when the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, passed away, I asked her, and

²⁷⁷ Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Habat Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh, Ibn Asākir al-Shāfi‘ī, *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1415 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Shīrī], vol. 42, pp. 131-132

she said, “The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: ‘Verily, Jibrīl used to present the Qur’ān to me once every year, but has presented it twice to me this year. I do not see except that I have been called (into the Presence of Allāh) and I will answer (i.e. die soon). Therefore, fear Allāh.’ So, I became sad. Then he told me privately and said, ‘Are you not pleased that your husband was the first of all Muslims to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them?** For verily you are the mistress of the women of my Ummah, as Maryam was the mistress of the women of her people?’”²⁷⁸

Imām al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385 H) is not left out either:

وسئل عن حديث أبي إسحاق، عن البراء، عن فاطمة بنت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، لما زوجها عليا قالت: زوجتني أحشم الساقين، عظيم البطن فقال: إنه لأولهم إسلاما، وأكثرهم علما، وأعظمهم حِلما.

فقال: يرويه أبو إسحاق السبيعي، واختلف عنه؛ فرواه عمر بن المثني، سئل الشيخ عنه، فقال: لا أعرفه إلا في هذا عن أبي إسحاق، عن البراء. وخالفه إسحاق بن إبراهيم الأزدي، شيخ كوفي من الشيعة؛ فرواه عن أبي إسحاق، عن زيد بن أرقم.

He was asked about the *ḥadīth* of Abū Ishāq, from al-Barā, from **Fāṭimah**, daughter of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him:

When ‘Alī married her, she said (to her father), “You have married me to someone with excited legs, and a big belly.” So, he (the Prophet) replied, “Verily, he was the first of them to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them.”

He (al-Dāraquṭnī) said: “Abū Ishāq al-Sabīṭī narrated it, and it is differently narrated from him. So, ‘Umar b. Al-Muthannā narrated it.” The Shaykh (al-Dāraquṭnī) was asked about him, and he replied, “I do not know him except in this (*ḥadīth*) from Abū Ishāq, from al-Barā. But Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Azdī, a Kūfan Shīṭī Shaykh, narrated differently from him and narrated it from Abū Ishāq from **Zayd b.**

²⁷⁸ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad b. Ayūb al-Ṭabarānī, *Muʿjam al-Kabīr* (Mosul: Maktabah al-ʿUlūm wa al-Ḥukm; 2nd edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Ḥamadī b. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Salāfi], vol. 22, p. 417, # 1030

Arqam.²⁷⁹

Let's see what ‘Allāmah al-Khawārazmī (d. 568 H) has on the matter as well:

وأخبرني شهردار هذا إجازة، أخبرنا عبدوس هذا كتابة، حدثنا أبو طالب، حدثنا ابن مردويه، حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن عاصم، حدثنا عمران بن عبد الرحيم، حدثنا أبو الصلت الهروي، حدثنا حسين بن حسن الأشقر، حدثنا قيس، عن الأعمش، عن عباية بن ربيعي، عن أبي أيوب: إن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله مرض مرضة فأتته فاطمة تَعُوْدُهُ فلما رأت ما يرسل الله صلى الله عليه وآله من الجهد والضعف استعبرت فبكت حتى سالت الدموع على خديها، فقال لها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: يا فاطمة إن لكرامة الله عز وجل إليك زوجك من أقدمهم سلماً وأكثرهم علماً "وأعظمهم حِلماً"

Shahrdār – ‘Abdaws – Abū Ṭālib – Ibn Mardawayh – Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Āṣim – ‘Imrān b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm – Abū al-Ṣalt al-Harwī – Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan al-Ashqarī – Qays – al-A’mash – ‘Ibāyah b. Rab’ī – **Abū Ayūb**:

The Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, was sick. So, Fāṭimah visited him. When she saw how the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his family, was, in terms of struggle and weakness, she shed tears and wept till there were tears on her cheeks. Therefore, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his family, said, “O Fāṭimah! It is through Allāh’s Honour of you that your husband was the first of them to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them.”²⁸⁰

Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) says about al-Khawārazmī:

الموفق بن أحمد بن محمد أبو المؤيد المكي، العلامة، خطيب خوارزم.

²⁷⁹ Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Aḥmad b. Maḥdī b. Mas’ūd b. al-Nu’mān b. Dīnār al-Baghdādī al-Dāraqutnī, *al-Ṭal al-Wāridah fi Aḥādīth al-Nabawiyyah* (Damām: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī; 1st edition, 1427 H) [annotators: Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad al-Dabāsī and Maḥmūd Khalīl], vol. 15, p. 172, # 3930

²⁸⁰ Al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Bakrī al-Makkī al-Ḥanafī al-Khawārazmī, *al-Manāqib* (Qum: Muasassat al-Nashr al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Shaykh Mālik al-Maḥmūdī], p. 112, #122

Al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, Abū Muʿayyad al-Makkī: The ‘allāmah (great scholar), the preacher of Khawārazm.²⁸¹

So, let us return to ‘Allāmah al-Khawārazmī:

وَأَنْبَأَنِي مَهْدِبُ الْأُمَّةِ أَبُو الْمُظْفَرِ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْهَمْدَانِيُّ - نَزِيلُ بَغْدَادٍ - أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْبَاقِيٍّ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ وَأَبُو الْقَاسِمِ هَبَةَ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْوَاحِدِ بْنِ الْحَصِينِ، قَالَا: أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْمُحَسِّنِ التَّنُوخِيِّ إِذَا، أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الصَّمَدِ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ شَاذَانَ الْبَزَازِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ بْنِ فَرَاتٍ بْنِ حَيَّانَ الْعَجَلِيِّ - قِرَاءَةُ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ لَفْظِهِ وَمِنْ كِتَابِهِ - حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الصَّفَّارِ الضَّرِيرِ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَهَّابِ بْنُ جَابِرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَمِيرٍ، عَنْ أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ عَاصِمِ الْأَحْوَلِ، عَنْ ابْنِ سِيرِينَ، عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ الْفَارِسِيِّ وَعَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: لَمَّا أَدْرَكَتْ فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ مَدْرَكَ النِّسَاءِ فَقَالَ لَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: ... إِنْ زَوْجَتَكَ أَقْدَمَهُمْ سَلَمًا أَكْثَرَهُمْ عِلْمًا وَأَعْظَمَهُمْ حِلْمًا

Abū al-Muẓaffar ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Hamdānī – Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Bāqī b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī and Abū al-Qāsim Habat Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. al-Ḥuṣayn – Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Ḥuṣayn al-Tanūkhī – Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Shadhān al-Bazāz – Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥuṣayn b. al-Khaṭṭāb b. Furāt b. Ḥayyān al-Tjlī – al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Ṣaffār al-Ḍarīr – ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Jābir – Muḥammad b. ‘Umayr – Ayūb – ‘Āṣim al-Aḥwal – Ibn Sirīn – **Umm Salamah, Salmān al-Fārisī** and **‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib**, peace be upon him:

When Fāṭimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allāh, attained womanhood So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his family, said to her: “... Verily, your husband was the first of them to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most

²⁸¹ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa Wafīyāt al-Mashāhīr wa al-A’lām* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Salām Tadmuri], vol. 39, pp. 326-327

clement of them.”²⁸²

Imām al-Jāḥiz (d. 255 H) even has some further crucial information:

وروى عبید الله بن موسى والفضل بن دكين والحسن بن عطية قالوا: حدثنا خالد بن طهمان عن نافع بن أبي نافع عن معقل بن يسار قال فقال لها: أما ترضين أنى زوجتك أقدم أمتي سلماؤا أكثرهم علما، وأفضلهم حلما؟ قالت: بلى، رضيت يا رسول الله.

وقد روى هذا الخبر يحيى بن عبد الحميد، وعبد السلام بن صالح، عن قيس بن الربيع عن أبي أيوب الأنصاري بالفاظه أو نحوها

وروى عبد السلام بن صالح عن إسحاق الأزرق عن جعفر بن محمد عن آبائه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لما زوج فاطمة ... فقال: يا فاطمة، إن الله أمرني فأنكحتك أقدمهم سلماؤا أكثرهم علما، وأعظمهم حلما....

قال: وقد روى هذا الخبر جماعة من الصحابة منهم أسماء بنت عميس، وأم أيمن وابن عباس، وجابر بن عبد الله.

‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā, al-Faḍl b. Dukayn and al-Ḥasan b. ‘Aṭiyyah – Khālīd b. Ṭahmān – Nāfi’ b. Abī Nāfi’ – **Ma’qil b. Yasār**: ... He (the Prophet) said to her (Fāṭimah): “Are you not satisfied that I have married you to the one who was the first of my Ummah to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them?” She replied, “I am pleased, O Messenger of Allāh.”

This report has been narrated by Yaḥyā b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd and ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ from Qays b. al-Rabi’ from **Abū Ayūb al-Anṣārī** with its text or a similar one.

‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ further narrated from Ishāq al-Azraq from Ja’far b. Muḥammad (al-Ṣādiq) from his ancestors (Muḥammad b. ‘Alī – ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn – Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī – **‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib**):

²⁸² Al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Bakrī al-Makkī al-Ḥanafī al-Khawārazmī, *al-Manāqib* (Qum: Muasassat al-Nashr al-Islāmī; 2nd edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Shaykh Mālik al-Maḥmūdī], pp. 342-353, # 364

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him ... said, “O Fāṭimah! Verily, Allāh has commanded me to marry you to the first of them to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them**, and the most clement of them....

He (al-Jāhiz) said: This report was narrated by a group of the Ṣaḥābah. Among them were **Asmā b. ‘Umays, Umm Ayman, Ibn ‘Abbās, and Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh.**²⁸³

Imām Ibn Asākir has the closing report:

أخبرنا جدي أبو المفضل يحيى بن علي أنا أبو القاسم علي بن محمد أنا أبو الحسن علي بن محمد أنا أبو الحسن علي بن أحمد بن محمد بن داود الرزاز أنا أبو عمرو عثمان بن أحمد بن السكك نا عبد الله بن روح المدائني نا سلام بن سليمان المدائني نا عمر بن المثنى عن أبي إسحاق عن أنس بن مالك قال قالت فاطمة زوجتي عليا حمش الساقين عظيم البط قليل المشي فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم زوجتك يا بنية أعظمهم حلما وأقدمهم سلوا أكثرهم علما

My grandfather Abū al-Faḍl Yahyā b. ‘Alī – Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. Muḥammad – Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad – Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Dāwud al-Razāz – Abū ‘Amr ‘Uthmān b. Aḥmad b. al-Simāk – ‘Abd Allāh b. Rūḥ al-Madāīnī – Salām b. Sulaymān al-Madāīnī – ‘Umar b. al-Muthannā – Abū Ishāq – **Anas b. Mālik:**

Fāṭimah said, “You have married me to ‘Alī with excited legs, and a big belly, and who hardly walks.” So, the Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, “I have married you, my daughter, to the most clement of them, and the first of them to accept Islām, **and the most knowledgeable of them.**”²⁸⁴

The following are therefore the Ṣaḥābah who have narrated *Ḥadīth al-‘Imr*:

1. ‘Āishah bint Abī Bakr
2. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib

²⁸³ Abū ‘Uthmān ‘Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāhiz, *al-Uthmāniyyah* (Egypt: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī; 1374 H) [annotator: ‘Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn], pp. 289-290

²⁸⁴ Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Habat Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh, Ibn Asākir al-Shāfi‘ī, *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1415 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Shīrī], vol. 42, p. 132

3. Abū Ayūb al-Anṣārī
4. Anas b. Mālīk
5. Asmā bint ‘Umayy
6. Buraydah
7. Fāṭimah b. Muḥammad
8. Ibn ‘Abbās
9. Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī
10. Ma’qīl b. Yasār
11. Salmān al-Fārisī
12. Umm Ayman
13. Umm Salamah
14. Zayd b. Arqam

This fact makes the *ḥadīth mutawātir*, and therefore absolutely true, far above even the level of *ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth*!

20 ḤADĪTH AL-‘ILM

SOME FURTHER *SHAWĀHID*

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) records:

فحدثنا بشرح هذا الحديث الشيخ أبو بكر بن إسحاق أنا الحسن بن علي بن زياد السري ثنا حامد بن يحيى البلخي بمكة ثنا سفيان عن إسماعيل بن أبي خالد عن قيس بن أبي حازم قال كنت بالمدينة فبينما أنا أطوف في السوق إذ بلغت أحجار الزيت فرأيت قوما مجتمعين على فارس قد ركب دابة وهو يشتم علي بن أبي طالب والناس وقوف حواليه إذ أقبل سعد بن أبي وقاص فوقف عليهم فقال : ما هذا ؟ فقالوا : رجل يشتم علي بن أبي طالب فتقدم سعد فأفرجوا له حتى وقف عليه فقال : يا هذا على ما تشتم علي بن أبي طالب ألم يكن أول من أسلم ألم يكن أول من صلى مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ألم يكن ازهد الناس ألم يكن أعلم الناس ؟ وذكر حتى قال : ألم يكن ختن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على ابنته ألم يكن صاحب راية رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في غزواته ؟ ثم استقبل القبلة ورفع يديه وقال : اللهم إن هذا يشتم وليا من أوليائك فلا تفرق هذا الجمع حتى ترهم قدرتك قال قيس : فو الله ما تفرقنا حتى ساخت به دابته فرمته على هامته في تلك الأحجار فانفلق دماغه ومات

Abū Bakr b. Ishāq – al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Ziyād al-Sirrī – Ḥāmid b. Yahyā al-Balakhī – Sufyān – Ismā‘īl b. Abī Khālid – Qays b. Abī Ḥāzim:

I was in Madīnah. While I was moving around in the market, oil stones arrived. So, I saw some people crowding around a Persian man who was riding an animal and cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. People stood round him when Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ turned and stood in front of them and he asked, “What is this?” They replied, “A man cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.” So, Sa’d moved forward and they made way for him until he stood before him and said, “O you! On what basis do you curse ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib? Is he not the first to accept Islām? Is he not the first to perform *Ṣalāt* with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him? Is he not the most ascetic of mankind? **Is he not the most knowledgeable of mankind?**” He mentioned (the merits of ‘Alī) until he said, “Is he not the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, who married his daughter? Is he not the flagbearer of the Messenger of Allāh in his battles?” Then he faced the Qiblah and raised his hand and said, “O Allāh! This one curses one of your beloved friends. Therefore, do not let this crowd disperse before you show them Your Power.”

Qays said: “By Allāh, we had not dispersed when the animal capsized him and threw him on his head into those stones. So, his brain broke open and he died.”²⁸⁵

Al-Ḥākim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.²⁸⁶

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) confirms:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim²⁸⁷

Of course, the context of Sa’d’s words is clear. After the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālīhi*, Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *‘alaihi al-salām*, is the most knowledgeable of all mankind, from the beginning of

²⁸⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 3, p. 571, # 6121

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*

existence till the Hour. That naturally includes both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. This is a very powerful testimony from one of the most senior Ṣaḥābah, and one of the earliest Muslims. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) claims the *ijmā’* of Sunnī ‘*ulamā*’ that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar were more knowledgeable than ‘Alī. Apparently, Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu*, was not part of that consensus, nor was the Messenger of Allāh!

Imām Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, is the best of the Ahl al-Bayt, *‘alaihim al-salām*, after the Prophet and Amīr al-Mūminīn. Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H) records his opinion too:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا وكيع عن إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن عمرو بن
حبشي قال خطبنا الحسن بن علي بعد قتل علي رضي الله عنها فقال: لقد فارقم
رجل بالأمس ما سبقه الأولون بعلم ولا أدركه الآخرون

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Wakī’ – Isrāīl
– Abū Ishāq – ‘Amr b. Ḥabashī:

Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī delivered a sermon to us after the killing of ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, and said: “Verily, a man has left you yesterday. The *amwalūn* (people of old)²⁸⁸ never surpassed him in knowledge, **and the *ākhirūn* (later ones)²⁸⁹ never reach his level (in knowledge).**²⁹⁰

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ says:

حسن

*Ḥasan*²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ This word normally refers to all the human generations since Ādam up till the beginning of the prophetic mission of the Messenger of Allāh in Arabia. See, for instance, Qur’ān 17:59, 23:81, 43:6 and 56:13.

²⁸⁹ The term is a reference to all human generations since the start of our Ummah till the *Qiyāmah*. See, among others, Qur’ān 56:14. This is especially the case since it is used in contrast to *amwalūn*. It therefore refers to all humans who are later in time than the *amwalūn*, and that only refers to humanity since Muḥammad.

²⁹⁰ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 1, p. 199, # 1720

²⁹¹ *Ibid*

This confirms the words of Sa’d. None among those who had died among the Ṣaḥābah – including Abū Bakr and ‘Umar – *ever* reached the level of Amīr al-Mūminīn in knowledge. In fact, none among all past human generations from Ādam was ever more knowledgeable than ‘Alī. Moreover, apart from Muḥammad himself²⁹², no other human being in our Ummah has ever attained, and none will ever reach, ‘Alī’s level in knowledge till the Day of Resurrection. Apparently, al-Ḥasan too was not part of the so-called consensus of Sunnī *‘ulamā*!

Let us seal this with the words of a top-ranking Sunnī scholar. His name was ‘Aṭā. Imām al-Dhahabī proclaims about him:

عطاء بن أبي رباح، سيد التابعين علما وعملا واتقانا في زمانه بمكة روى عن عائشة، وأبي هريرة، والكبار. وعاش تسعين سنة أو أزيد. وكان حجة إماما كبير الشأن، أخذ عنه أبو حنيفة وقال: ما رأيت مثله.

‘Aṭā b. Abī Rabāḥ, **the master of the Tābi’īn in knowledge, piety, and generosity during his era in Makkah**. He narrated from ‘Āishah, Abū Hurayrah and the senior (Ṣaḥābah). He lived 90 years or a little over. **He was an *hujjah* (authority), an Imām of great significance**. Abū Ḥanīfah learned from him, and said, “I have never seen anyone like him”.²⁹³

Al-Ḥāfiẓ also submits:

عطاء بن أبي رباح نزيل مكة واحد الفقهاء والأئمة

‘Aṭā b. Abī Rabāḥ.... He lived in Makkah. **He was one of the jurists**

²⁹² Generalized statements like that of Imām al-Ḥasan were always made against the backdrop of an implied understanding that the Messenger of Allāh was excluded. We already quoted in this book a *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* with this wording: “We used to say that the best judge among the people of Madīnah was ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased”. Of course, Prophet Muḥammad too was living in Madīnah at those same times! However, this speaker intended to say “the people of Madīnah apart from the Messenger of Allāh” but dropped the last part because it was patently unnecessary.

²⁹³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-ʿitdāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah; 1st edition, 1382 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 3, p. 70, # 5640

and Imāms.²⁹⁴

So, was this great Imām part of the alleged “consensus”? Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235 H) records:

حدثنا عبدة بن سليمان عن عبد الملك بن أبي سليمان قال: قلت لعطاء: كان في أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أحد أعلم من علي؟ قال: لا، والله أعلمه!

‘Abdah b. Sulaymān – ‘Abd al-Malik b. Abī Sulaymān:

I said to ‘Aṭā: “Was there ANYONE among the Ṣaḥābah of the Messenger of Allāh who was more knowledgeable than ‘Alī?” He replied, “**I swear by Allāh, I do NOT know any such person!**”²⁹⁵

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) states about the first narrator:

عبدة بن سليمان الكلبي أبو محمد الكوفي يقال اسمه عبد الرحمن ثقة ثبت

‘Abdah b. Sulaymān al-Kalābī, Abū Muḥammad al-Kūfī, it is said that his name was ‘Abd al-Raḥman: **Thiqah (trustworthy), thabt (accurate)**.²⁹⁶

Concerning the second narrator, he says:

عبد الملك بن أبي سليمان ميسرة العرزمي بفتح المهملة وسكون الراء وبالزاي المفتوحة صدوق له أوهام

‘Abd al-Malik b. Abī Sulaymān Maysarah al-‘Arzamī: **Ṣadūq (very truthful)**, he had hallucinations.²⁹⁷

The chain is therefore *ḥasan* due to ‘Abd al-Malik.

²⁹⁴ Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān* (Beirut: Manshūrāt Muasassat al-‘Aṭamī li al-Maṭbū‘āt; 2nd edition, 1390 H), vol. 7, p. 305, # 4038

²⁹⁵ ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Abī Shaybah Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Bakr b. Abī Shaybah al-Kūfī al-‘Ubsī, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah fi al-Aḥādīth wa al-Athār* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1409 H) [annotator: Prof. Sa‘īd al-Laḥām], vol. 7, p. 502, # 46

²⁹⁶ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabḍīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 628, # 4283

²⁹⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 1, pp. 615-616, # 4198

21 ḤADĪTH AL-ISTISLĀM

INVESTIGATING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) admits that Amīr al-Mūminīn, ‘*alaihi al-salām*’, was the first human being ever to accept Islām from the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ālihi*:

ثم فيه قول علي صليت ستة أشهر قبل الناس فهذا مما يعلم بطلانه بالضرورة فإن
بين إسلامه وإسلام زيد وأبي بكر وخديجة يوماً أو نحوه فكيف يصلي قبل الناس
بسته أشهر

Then, in it (i.e. the report) is the statement “‘Alī performed *Ṣalāt* six months before anyone else”, this (statement) is one which is known to be necessarily fallacious, because **between his (‘Alī’s) acceptance of Islām and the acceptance of Islām by Zayd, Abū Bakr and Khadījah was only a distance of one day or a period like that.** So, how did he perform *Ṣalāt* six months before anyone else?²⁹⁸

So, ‘Alī accepted Islām one whole day before Khadījah, Zayd and Abū Bakr. But then, our dear Shaykh has a surprise package for us:

قول القائل علي أول من صلى مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ممنوع بل أكثر الناس

²⁹⁸ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minbāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 5, p. 19

على خلاف ذلك وان أبا بكر صلى قبله

The claim that ‘Alī was the first to perform *Ṣalāt* with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, is impossible. **Rather, the majority of the people hold a contrary view, and believe that Abū Bakr perform *Ṣalāt* before him (i.e. ‘Alī).**²⁹⁹

One wonders. Since Amīr al-Mūminīn accepted Islām before Abū Bakr, how come the latter offered *Ṣalāt* before him? Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah attempts to solve the puzzle:

فان الناس متنازعون في أول من أسلم فقبل أبو بكر أول من أسلم فهو اسبق
إسلاما من على وقيل أن عليا أسلم قبله لكن علي كان صغيرا وإسلام الصبي فيه
نزاع بين العلماء ولا نزاع في أن إسلام أبي بكر أكمل وانفع

The people disagreed about who accepted Islām first. It is said that Abū Bakr was the first to accept Islām, and therefore accepted Islām before ‘Alī. **It is (also) said that ‘Alī accepted Islām before him. However, ‘Alī was a child, and the acceptance of Islām by a child, there is disagreement over it (i.e. its validity) among the ‘ulamā.** Meanwhile, there is no disagreement about the fact that **the acceptance of Islām by Abū Bakr was more perfect** and more beneficial (than that of ‘Alī).³⁰⁰

He adds:

والصبي المولود بين أبوين كافرين يجري عليه حكم الكفر في الدنيا باتفاق المسلمين
وإذا أسلم قبل البلوغ فهل يجري عليه حكم الإسلام قبل البلوغ على قولين للعلماء
بخلاف البالغ فإنه يصير مسلما باتفاق المسلمين فكان إسلام الثلاثة مخرجا لهم من
الكفر باتفاق المسلمين وأما إسلام علي فهل يكون مخرجا له من الكفر على قولين
مشهورين ومذهب الشافعي أن إسلام الصبي غير مخرج له من الكفر

A child born to two pagan parents is considered a pagan in this world by the consensus of Muslims. If he accepts Islām before maturity, is he considered a Muslim before he reaches maturity? There are two opinions among the *‘ulamā*, as opposed to the situation of a

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 7, p. 273

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 7, p. 155

matured person (who accepts Islām) because he (the matured person) is considered a Muslim by the consensus of Muslims. So, the acceptance of Islām by the three (i.e. Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān) took them out of paganism by the consensus of Muslims. **However, the acceptance of Islām by ‘Alī, did it take him out of paganism?** There are two well-known opinions. **The opinion of (Imām) al-Shāfi’ī was that the acceptance of Islām by a child does not take him out of paganism.**³⁰¹

Our Shaykh has not explicitly endorsed either of the two opinions. Nonetheless, we will proceed with the assumption that Imām al-Shāfi’ī was correct.

The first question here is: was ‘Alī really a “child” when he accepted Islām? Imām Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463 H) answers:

قال أبو عمر قيل أسلم على وهو ابن ثلاث عشرة سنة وقيل ابن اثنتي عشرة سنة
وقيل ابن خمس عشرة وقيل ابن ست عشرة وقيل ابن عشر وقيل ابن ثمان....

وذكر أبو زيد عمر بن شبة قال حدثنا سريج بن النعمان قال حدثنا الفرات بن
السائب عن ميمون بن مهران عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما قال أسلم علي بن أبي
طالب وهو ابن ثلاث عشرة سنة وتوفي وهو ابن ثلاث وستين سنة قال أبو
عمر رحمه الله هذا أصح ما قيل في ذلك

Abū ‘Umar said, “It is said that ‘Alī accepted Islām when he was thirteen years old. It is said that he was twelve years old. It is said that he was fifteen years old. It is said that he was sixteen years old. It is said that he was ten years old. It is said that he was eight years old....

Abū Zayd ‘Umar b. Shaybah mentioned that – Surayj b. al-Nu’mān – al-Furāt b. al-Sāib – Maymūn b. Mahrān – Ibn ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with them both: “**Alī b. Abī Ṭālib accepted Islām while he was THIRTEEN YEARS OLD and died when he was sixty-three years old**”. Abū ‘Umar, may Allāh be merciful to him, said: “**This is the most correct opinion on the matter**”.³⁰²

³⁰¹ *Ibid*, vol. 8, pp. 285-286

³⁰² Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr b. ‘Āṣim al-Nimrī al-Qurṭubī, *al-Istī‘āb fī Ma’rifat al-Aṣḥāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl; 1st edition, 1412 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 3, pp. 1093-1095, # 1855

Therefore, ‘Alī was thirteen years old when he accepted Islām at the hands of the Messenger of Allāh. But, was he a matured person then, or was he still a child? Let us get the testimony of an eye-witness. Imām al-Haythamī (d. 807 H) records:

عن أبي رافع قال : أول من أسلم من الرجال علي وأول من أسلم من النساء خديجة

Narrated Abū Rāfi’:

The first to accept Islām **among the male adults** was ‘Alī and the first to accept Islām from the female adults was Khadījah.³⁰³

Al-Haythamī comments:

رواه البزار ورجاله رجال الصحيح

Al-Bazzār recorded it and its narrators are narrators of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*³⁰⁴

So, Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī was an “adult” when he accepted Islām. Therefore, his Islām was – in terms of quality - as “perfect” as that of Abū Bakr and the other *ḵhalīfahs*. Moreover, ‘Alī accepted Islām about twenty hours or more before Zayd, Abū Bakr and Khadījah, according to the admission of Shaykh Ibn ‘Taymiyyah. Therefore, he enjoyed precedence in his “perfect” Islām over all others. This is further confirmed by this *ḥadīth* documented by Imām al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H):

حدثنا الحسن بن عبد الأعلى النرسي الصنعائي، حدثنا عبد الرزاق، حدثنا سفيان الثوري، عن سلمة بن كهيل، عن أبي صادق، عن عليم الكندي، عن سلمان الفارسي رضي الله عنه قال : أول هذه الأمة ورودا على نبيها، أولها إسلاما، علي بن أبي طالب

Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Abd al-A’lā al-Narsī al-Ṣana’ānī – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Sufyān al-Thawrī – Salamah b. Kuhayl – Abū Ṣādiq – ‘Alīm al-Kindī – Salmān al-Fārisī, may Allāh be pleased with him:

³⁰³ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, p. 353, # 15258

³⁰⁴ *Ibid*

“The first of this Ummah to meet its Prophet (on the Day of Resurrection) will be **the first of them to accept Islām, ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib.**”³⁰⁵

Shaykh al-Ḥāji comments:

الإسناد: قال الهيثمي: ورجاله ثقات. وقال حمدي السلفي: قلت: إن إبراهيم والحسن من الرواة عن عبد الرزاق بعد اختلاطه.

The chain: Al-Haythamī said, “**Its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy)**”. Ḥamadī al-Salafī also said: “I say: ‘Ibrāhīm and al-Ḥasan are among those narrators who transmitted from ‘Abd al-Razzāq during his confusion.”³⁰⁶

In simple words, the narrators are all trustworthy indeed. However, al-Ḥasan narrated from ‘Abd al-Razzāq after the latter’s memory failure and during the consequent confusion. However, the report of ‘Abd al-Razzāq is corroborated by this report, recorded by Imām Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235 H):

حدثنا معاوية بن هشام حدثنا قيس عن سلمة بن كهيل عن أبي صادق عن عليم عن سلمان قال: أول هذه الأمة ورودا على نبيها أولها إسلاما علي بن أبي طالب.

Mu’āwiyah b. Hishām – Qays – Salamah b. Kuhayl – Abū Ṣādiq – ‘Alīm – Salmān:

“The first of this Ummah to meet its Prophet (on the Day of Resurrection) will be **the first of them to accept Islām, ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib.**”³⁰⁷

We already know about the trustworthiness of Salamah, Abū Ṣādiq and ‘Alīm al-Kindī. What about Mu’āwiyah and Qays? Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) states about Mu’āwiyah:

معاوية بن هشام القصار أبو الحسن الكوفي مولى بني أسد ويقال له معاوية بن أبي

³⁰⁵ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *Kitāb al-Awāil* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 3rd edition, 1408 H) [annotator: Muḥammad Shakūr b. Maḥmūd al-Ḥāji], p. 78, # 51

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*

³⁰⁷ ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Abī Shaybah Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī Bakr b. Abī Shaybah al-Kūfī al-‘Ubsī, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah fī al-Aḥādīth wa al-Athār* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1409 H) [annotator: Prof. Sa’īd al-Laḥām], vol. 8, p. 350, # 222

العباس صدوق له أوهام

Mu'āwiyah b. Hishām al-Qaṣār, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Kūfī, freed slave of Banū Asad, he is also Mu'āwiyah b. Abī al-‘Abbās: **Ṣadūq** (very truthful), he had hallucinations.³⁰⁸

Qays is almost like that too, according to al-Ḥāfiẓ:

قيس بن الربيع الأسدي أبو محمد الكوفي صدوق تغير لما كبر وأدخل عليه ابنه ما ليس من حديثه فحدث به

Qays b. al-Rabī' al-Asadī, Abū Muḥammad al-Kūfī: **Ṣadūq** (very truthful). His memory deteriorated when he became old, and his son told him things that were not part of his (original) *aḥādīth*, and he (Qays) narrated them as *aḥādīth*.³⁰⁹

Both were very truthful, but with varying memory problems. Nonetheless, their report is a very good *shāhid* for the *riwāyah* of ‘Abd al-Razzāq. As a result, one can safely conclude that the *athar* of Salmān al-Fārisī above, narrated by ‘Abd al-Razzāq, is *ṣaḥīḥ bi shawāhidih*. Therefore, Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib was the first human being, and the first male *adult*, to accept Islām.

Imām al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 H) records a *ḥadīth* that further corroborates this submission:

حدثنا محمد بن بشار و محمد بن المنثني قالوا حدثنا محمد بن جعفر حدثنا شعبة بن عمرو بن مرة عن أبي حمزة رجل من الأنصار قال سمعت زيد بن أرقم يقول أول من أسلم علي

Muḥammad b. Bashār and Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā – Muḥammad b. Ja’far – Shu’bah b. ‘Amr b. Marrah – Abū Ḥamza, who was a man from the Anṣār – Zayd b. Arqam:

³⁰⁸ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 197, # 6795

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 33, # 5590

“The first to accept Islām was ‘Alī.”³¹⁰

Al-Tirmidhī states:

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*³¹¹

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) agrees:

صحيح الإسناد

It has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain³¹²

Imām al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H) also documents:

حدثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم، عن عبد الرزاق، عن معمر، عن عثمان الجري، عن
مقسم، عن عبد الله بن عباس قال: أول من أسلم علي رضي الله

Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – ‘Uthmān al-Jazarī –
Miqsam – ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās:

“The first one to accept Islām was ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with
him.”³¹³

Shaykh al-Ḥājī comments:

حديث صحيح رجاله ثقات

A *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*. Its narrators are trustworthy.³¹⁴

Imām Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr caps the references:

³¹⁰ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Ṭurāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 5, p. 642, # 3735

³¹¹ *Ibid*

³¹² *Ibid*

³¹³ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *Kitāb al-Awāil* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 3rd edition, 1408 H) [annotator: Muḥammad Shakūr b. Maḥmūd al-Ḥājī], p. 78, # 52

³¹⁴ *Ibid*

وروى عن سلمان وأبي ذر والمقداد وخباب وجابر وأبي سعيد الخدري وزيد بن الأرقم أن علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه أول من أسلم وفضله هؤلاء على غيره

Salmān, Abū Dharr, al-Miqdād, Khabāb, Jābir, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī and Zayd b. Arqam narrated that ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, was the first to accept Islām, and these people placed him in rank above everyone else.³¹⁵

Notably, along with Ibn ‘Abbās and Abū Rāfi’, those were nine Ṣaḥābah. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) records about the tenth Ṣaḥābī –Sa’d b. Abī Waqqās:

عن قيس بن أبي حازم قال كنت بالمدينة فبينما أنا أطوف في السوق إذ بلغت أحجار الزيت فرأيت قوماً مجتمعين على فارس قد ركب دابة وهو يشتم علي بن أبي طالب والناس وقوف حواليه إذ أقبل سعد بن أبي وقاص فوقف عليهم فقال : ما هذا ؟ فقالوا : رجل يشتم علي بن أبي طالب فتقدم سعد فأفرجوا له حتى وقف عليه فقال : يا هذا على ما تشتم علي بن أبي طالب ألم يكن أول من أسلم ألم يكن أول من صلى مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

Narrated Qays b. Abī Ḥāzim:

I was in Madīnah. While I was moving around in the market, oil stones arrived. So, I saw some people crowding around a Persian man who was riding an animal and cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. People stood round him when Sa’d b. Abī Waqqās turned and stood in front of them and he asked, “What is this?” They replied, “A man cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.” So, Sa’d moved forward and they made way for him until he stood before him and said, “O you! On what basis do you curse ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib? **Is he not the first to accept Islām? Is he not the first to perform Ṣalāt with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him?....**”³¹⁶

³¹⁵ Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr b. ‘Āṣim al-Nimrī al-Qurṭubī, *al-Istīʿāb fī Maʿrifat al-Aṣḥāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Jil; 1st edition, 1412 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 3, pp. 1090, # 1855

³¹⁶ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 571, # 6121

Al-Ḥākim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.³¹⁷

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) confirms:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim³¹⁸

With the above, it can be confidently declared that the reports stating that ‘Alī was the first ever to accept Islām are *mutawātir*, and therefore *absolutely* true and undisputable. Moreover, that fact is further corroborated by another *mutawātir* tradition of the Prophet – *Ḥadīth al-ʿIlm* – narrated by fourteen of the Ṣaḥābah!

Additional evidence that Amīr al-Mūminīn had become an “adult” before he recited the *shahādah* of Islām lies in the fact that the Prophet performed the congregational prayers with him. He would not do that with a child! The report of Sa’d b. Abī Waqqās is already cited above. Meanwhile, there is corroboration in this *ḥadīth* documented by Imām al-Tirmidhī:

حدثنا محمد بن حميد حدثنا إبراهيم بن المختار عن شعبة عن أبي بلج عن عمرو بن
ميمون عن ابن عباس قال: أول من صلى علي

Muḥammad b. Ḥamīd – Ibrāhīm b. al-Mukhtār – Shu’bah – Abū Balj –
‘Amr b. Maymūn – Ibn ‘Abbās:

“The first to perform *Ṣalāt* was ‘Alī.”³¹⁹

‘Allāmah al-Albānī says:

صحيح

³¹⁷ *Ibid*

³¹⁸ *Ibid*

³¹⁹ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-ʿTurāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 5, p. 642, # 3734

*Ṣaḥīḥ*³²⁰

Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H) records a *shāhid* for the above report:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يزيد بن هارون انا شعبة عن عمرو بن مرة قال
سمعت أبا حمزة يحدث عن زيد بن أرقم قال أول من صلى مع رسول الله صلى الله
عليه وسلم علي رضي الله تعالى عنه

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yazīd b. Hārūn – Shu’bah – ‘Amr b. Marrah – Abū Ḥamzah – Zayd b Arqam:

“The first to perform *Ṣalāt* with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, was ‘Alī, may Allāh the Most High be pleased with him.”³²¹

Quite surprisingly, Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ states about it:

إسناده ضعيف

Its chain is *da’if*³²²

As usual, he has given no reason for the weird verdict. So, let us independently verify the strength of that *sanad*. Is the above report authentic? Or, is it really weak?

Al-Ḥāfiẓ says about the first narrator:

عبد الله بن أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل الشيباني أبو عبد الرحمن ولد الإمام ثقة

‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥman: son of the Imām, **thiqah (trustworthy)**.³²³

He further states about the second narrator:

³²⁰ *Ibid*

³²¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 4, p. 368, # 19303

³²² *Ibid*

³²³ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 477, # 3216

أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل بن هلال بن أسد الشيباني المروزي نزيل بغداد أبو عبد الله
أحد الأئمة ثقة حافظ فقيه حجة

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal b. Hilāl b. Asad al-Shaybānī al-Marūzī,
a Baghdād resident, Abū ‘Abd Allāh: **One of the Imāms, *thiqah***
(trustworthy), *ḥāfiẓ* (a *ḥadīth* scientist), jurist, ***ḥujjah* (an**
authority).³²⁴

Concerning the third narrator, the verdict is the same, according to al-Ḥāfiẓ:

يزيد بن هارون بن زاذان السلمي مولاهم أبو خالد الواسطي ثقة متقن عابد

Yazīd b. Hārūn b. Zāzān al-Sulamī, their freed slave, Abū Khālīd al-
Wāsiṭī: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy), extremely precise,** a great worshipper
of Allāh.³²⁵

The fourth narrator, Shu’bah, needs no introduction. Al-Ḥāfiẓ makes some
ground-breaking pronouncements about him nonetheless:

شعبة بن الحجاج بن الورد العتكي مولاهم أبو بسطام الواسطي ثم البصري ثقة حافظ
متقن كان الثوري يقول هو أمير المؤمنين في الحديث

Shu’bah b. al-Ḥajjāj b. al-Ward al-‘Atkī, their freed slave, Abū Bustām al-
Wāsiṭī, al-Baṣrī: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy), *ḥāfiẓ* (a *ḥadīth* scientist),**
extremely precise. Al-Thawrī used to say: “He was the amīr al-
mūminīn (the supreme leader) in *al-Ḥadīth*.”³²⁶

He has a very simple verdict about the fifth narrator as well:

عمرو بن مرة بن عبد الله بن طارق الجملي بفتح الجيم والميم المرادي أبو عبد الله
الكوفي الأعمى ثقة عابد كان لا يدلس

‘Amr b. Marrah b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṭāriq al-Jamalī al-Murādī, Abū ‘Abd
Allāh al-Kūfī, the blind person: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy),** a great

³²⁴ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 44, # 96

³²⁵ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 333, # 7817

³²⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 418, # 2798

worshipper of Allāh. He did NOT do *tadlīs*.³²⁷

The last narrator is like that too, as pronounced by al-Ḥāfīz:

طلحة بن يزيد الأيلي بفتح الهمزة وسكون الياء أبو حمزة مولى الأنصار نزل الكوفة
وثقه النسائي

Ṭalḥah b. Yazīd al-Ayilī, the freed slave of the Anṣār, he lived in Kūfah:

Al-Nasāī declared him *thiqah* (trustworthy).³²⁸

So, all the narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), and there is no evidence of disconnection in the chain. As such, the *isnād* is *ṣaḥīḥ* without a doubt! ‘Allāmah al-Albānī also states about another *ḥadīth* with a very similar *sanad*:

أخرجه أبو داود ... من طريق شعبة عن عمرو بن مرة قال: سمعت أبا حمزة أنه
سمع زيد بن أرقم قال.... قلت: وهذا سند صحيح رجاله رجال الشيخين غير أبي
حمزة واسمه طلحة بن يزيد الأنصاري فمن رجال البخاري، ووثقه ابن حبان
والنسائي.

Abū Dāwud recorded it ... through the route of **Shu’bah – ‘Amr b. Marrah – Abū Ḥamzah – Zayd b. Arqam....** I (al-Albānī) say: **This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.** Its narrators are narrators of the two Shaykhs apart from **Abū Ḥamzah, and his name is Ṭalḥah b. Yazīd al-Anṣārī and he is from the narrators of al-Bukhārī. Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Nasāī declared him *thiqah* (trustworthy).**³²⁹

In conclusion, the chain of Zayd b. Arqam’s report that ‘Alī was the first human being to perform *Ṣalāt* with the Prophet, recorded in *Musnad Ahmad*, is impeccably *ṣaḥīḥ*. All the narrators are trustworthy, and there is no disconnection in the chain whatsoever. As such, Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ’s *taḍ’īf* of the *sanad* has no academic basis.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 745, # 5128

³²⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 452, # 3049

³²⁹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shaykhun min Fiqihāb wa Fawāidihāb* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 1, p. 242, # 123

22 ḤADĪTH AL-ZUHD

CORRECTING AN EXAGGERATION

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states about both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar:

أهل العلم بحالها يقولون ازهد الناس بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الزهد
الشرعي أبو بكر وعمر وذلك أن أبا بكر كان له مال يكتسبه فأنفقه كله في
سبيل الله

The People of Knowledge, concerning both of them, say that the most ascetic of mankind after the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him – in terms of legitimate ascetism – are Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. This is because Abū Bakr earned some wealth and spent all of it in the Path of Allāh.³³⁰

He adds:

و قال ابن حزم و قال قائلون علي كان أزهدهم قال و كذب هذا الجاهل

Ibn Ḥazm said: “Some people say that ‘Alī was the most ascetic of them”. He (Ibn Ḥazm) replied, “**This ignorant one has lied.**”³³¹

³³⁰ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minbāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muassasat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 479

³³¹ *Ibid*, vol. 7, p. 481-482

So, let us see the faces of some of these “ignorant liars”. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) records:

فحدثنا بشرح هذا الحديث الشيخ أبو بكر بن إسحاق أنا الحسن بن علي بن زياد السري ثنا حامد بن يحيى البلخي بمكة ثنا سفيان عن إسماعيل بن أبي خالد عن قيس بن أبي حازم قال كنت بالمدينة فبينما أنا أطوف في السوق إذ بلغت أحجار الزيت فرأيت قوماً مجتمعين على فارس قد ركب دابة وهو يشتم علي بن أبي طالب والناس وقوف حواله إذ أقبل سعد بن أبي وقاص فوقف عليهم فقال : ما هذا ؟ فقالوا : رجل يشتم علي بن أبي طالب فتقدم سعد فأفرجوا له حتى وقف عليه فقال : يا هذا على ما تشتم علي بن أبي طالب ألم يكن أول من أسلم ألم يكن أول من صلى مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ألم يكن ازهد الناس ؟

Abū Bakr b. Ishāq – al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Ziyād al-Sirrī – Ḥāmid b. Yaḥyā al-Balakhī – Sufyān – Ismā‘īl b. Abī Khālid – Qays b. Abī Ḥāzim:

I was in Madīnah. While I was moving around in the market, oil stones arrived. So, I saw some people crowding around a Persian man who was riding an animal and cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. People stood round him when Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ turned and stood in front of them and he asked, “What is this?” They replied, “A man cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.” So, Sa’d moved forward and they made way for him until he stood before him and said, “O you! On what basis do you curse ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib? Is he not the first to accept Islām? Is he not the first to perform *Ṣalāt* with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him? **Is he not the most ascetic of mankind?**”³³²

Al-Ḥākim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.³³³

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) confirms:

³³² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 571, # 6121

³³³ *Ibid*

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim³³⁴

One would never have guessed correctly that the Ahl al-Sunnah consider Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* - one of the most senior Ṣaḥābah and one of the earliest converts to Islām - to be an ignorant liar! Wait a minute! How come the testimony of Sa’d - an eye-witness - was ignorant fallacy while that of Sunnī scholars, born centuries after him, is sound knowledge? Has the world really turned upside down?

Interestingly, another big Sunnī name features prominently on the list of “ignorant liars”. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 H) copies this report:

وقال يحيى بن معين: عن علي بن الجعد عن الحسن بن صالح قال: تناكروا الزهاد عند عمر بن عبد العزيز فقال قائلون: فلان، وقال قائلون: فلان، فقال عمر بن عبد العزيز: أزهّد الناس في الدنيا علي بن أبي طالب.

Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn – ‘Alī b. al-Ja’d – al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ:

They mentioned ascetism in the presence of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. Some people said, “So-and-so (is the most ascetic)”. Others said, “So-and-so (is the most ascetic)”. So, ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said, “**The most ascetic of mankind - as far as this world (i.e. material possessions, power, and worldly pleasures) is concerned - is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.**”³³⁵

Al-Ḥāfiẓ says about the first narrator:

يحيى بن معين بن عون الغطفاني مولاهم أبو زكريا البغدادي ثقة حافظ مشهور إمام الجرح والتعديل

Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn b. ‘Awn al-Ghaṭfānī, their freed slave, Abū Zakariyāh al-Baghdādī: **Thiqah (trustworthy), a well-known ḥāfiẓ (ḥadīth**

³³⁴ *Ibid*

³³⁵ Abū al-Fidā Ismāʿīl b. Kathīr al-Dimashqī, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* (Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1408 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Shīrī], vol. 8, p. 6

scientist), Imām of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dil*.³³⁶

Concerning the second narrator, he also states:

علي بن الجعد بن عبيد أبو الحسن الجوهري البغدادي ثقة ثبت رمي بالتشيع

‘Alī b. al-Ja’d b. ‘Ubayd, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Jawharī al-Baghdādī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), **thabt** (accurate), he was accused of Shī’ism.³³⁷

Lastly, he has this verdict on the third narrator:

الحسن بن صالح بن حي وهو حيان بن شفي بضم بالمعجمة والفاء مصغر
الهمداني بسكون الميم الثوري ثقة فقيه عابد رمي بالتشيع

Al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ b. Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥayy, and he was Ḥayyān b. Shufay al-Hamdānī al-Thawrī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), a jurist, a great worshipper of Allāh, he was accused of Shī’ism.³³⁸

The *sanad*, therefore, is *ṣaḥīḥ*. All the narrators are trustworthy, and there is no disconnection among the narrators. So, ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz – the righteous *khalīfah* in the sight of most of the Ahl al-Sunnah – was actually an “ignorant liar” according to the view of Imām Ibn Ḥazm, endorsed by Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah!

It is fair, at this point, to compare the asceticism of either Abū Bakr or ‘Umar with that of ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, for further verification. We prefer ‘Umar for the research, since more materials are available on his lifetime and death than on his predecessor. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah claims that ‘Umar was more ascetic than ‘Alī. Let us test the submission against reality. We open the investigation with this *athar* from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*:

حدثنا محمد بن سلام أخبرنا محمد بن يزيد أخبرنا ابن جريج قال أخبرني عطاء عن
عبيد الله بن عمير: أن أبا موسى الأشعري استأذن على عمر بن الخطاب رضي
الله عنه فلم يؤذن له وكأنه كان مشغولاً فرجع أبو موسى ففرغ عمر فقال ألم أسمع

³³⁶ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 316, # 7679

³³⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 689, # 4714

³³⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 205, #1254

صوت عبد الله بن قيس ائذنوا له . قيل قد رجع فدعاه فقال كنا نؤمر بذلك . فقال تأتيني على ذلك بالبينة فانطلق إلى مجلس الأنصار فسألهم فقالوا لا يشهد على هذا إلا أصغرنا أبو سعيد الخدري فذهب بأبي سعيد الخدري فقال عمر أخفي هذا علي من أمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ؟ ألهاني الصفق بالأسواق . يعني الخروج إلى تجارة

Muḥammad b. Salām – Mukhlid b. Yazīd – Ibn Jurayḥ – ‘Aṭā – ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Umayr:

Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī sought permission of ‘Umar b. al-Khattaab, may Allāh be pleased with him, to enter his house. But, he (‘Umar) did not give him permission. It was as though he (‘Umar) was busy. So Abū Mūsā went back. When ‘Umar finished his job, he asked, “**Didn't I hear the voice of ‘Abd Allāh b. Qays (i.e. the real name of Abū Mūsā)?** Allow him to come in.” It was said, “He (Abū Mūsā) has returned.” So, he (‘Umar) sent for him and (on his arrival), he (Abū Mūsā) said, “We were ordered to do so”. ‘Umar told him, “Bring witness in proof of that.” Abū Mūsā went to the assembly of the Anṣār and asked them. They said, “None amongst us will testify to that except the youngest of us, Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī.” Abū Mūsā then took Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (to ‘Umar) and ‘Umar said “Has this order of the Messenger of Allāh been hidden from me? **I used to be busy trading in markets.**”³³⁹

Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records another report with some more details:

حدثني عمرو بن محمد بن بكير الناقد حدثنا سفیان بن عيينة حدثنا والله يزيد بن حصيفة عن بسر بن سعيد قال سمعت أبا سعيد الخدري يقول كنت جالسا بالمدينة في مجلس الأنصار فأتانا أبو موسى فزعا أو مدعورا قلنا ما شأنك ؟ قال إن عمر أرسل إلي أن آتية فأتيت بابه فسلمت ثلاثا فلم يرد علي فرجعت فقال ما منعك أن تأتينا ؟ فقلت إني آتيت فسلمت على بابك ثلاثا فلم يردوا علي فرجعت وقد قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إذا استأذن أحدكم ثلاثا فلم يؤذن له فليرجع فقال عمر أقم عليه البينة ولا أوجعتك فقال أبي بن كعب لا يقوم معه إلا

³³⁹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J‘ufī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 2, p. 727, # 1956

أصغر القوم قال أبو سعيد قلت أنا أصغر القوم قال فاذهب به

‘Amr b. Muḥammad b. Bukayr al-Nāqid – Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah – Yazīd b. Ḥuṣayfah – Busr b. Sa‘īd – Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī:

I was sitting in Madīnah in the assembly of the Anṣār when Abū Mūsā came to us trembling with fear. We said, “What is the problem with you?” He replied, **“Umar sent for me. So, I went to his door, and said *as-salām ‘alaikum* three times and he did not reply me.** Therefore, I returned. On that, he said, **“Why did you not come to us?”** I said, “I came to you and said *as-salām ‘alaikum* three times at your door but I was not given any response. So, I returned. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, had said, ‘When any of you seeks permission to enter three times, and he is not permitted, he must turn back’”. So, ‘Umar said, “Bring evidence to support it. Otherwise, I will take you to task.” Ubayy b. Ka‘b said, “None shall stand with him (to testify) but the youngest of the people.” Abū Sa‘īd said, “I am the youngest”. He (Ubayy) said, “Then go with him.”³⁴⁰

‘Umar literally heard him saying *as-salāmu ‘alaikum* three times, but did not respond. In line with the Sunnah, Abū Mūsā returned. Strangely, ‘Umar proceeded to accuse him of NOT having come to his door at all despite his message! That certainly was a deliberately false accusation from the *khalīfah* of the believers! In any case, Abū Mūsā explained himself, and excused his action through the Sunnah of the Messenger, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alihi*. Quite weirdly, ‘Umar had absolutely no clue about this Sunnah! From the narrations, it is clear that all the Anṣār knew of the Prophetic order. In what looks like a humiliation of the *khalīfah*, they randomly picked the youngest of them, to narrate it to him. But, what was ‘Umar’s excuse? He used “to be busy trading in markets”. ‘Umar was moving from market to market doing business in order to make money. Therefore, he did not have time to learn the Sunnah from the Messenger! As such, he was clueless about even some of the most basic Sunnahs.

Apparently, money had more priority over the Sunnah in the sight of ‘Umar. What about ‘Alī? Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr states:

قال شعبة بن الحجاج ، عن سَمَاك ، عن خالد بن عَرَّوَةَ أنه سمع عليا وشعبة أيضًا ،

³⁴⁰ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1694, # 2153 (33)

عن القاسم بن أبي بزة ، عن أبي الطُّفَيْل ، سمع علياً . وثبت أيضاً من غير وجه ، عن أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب : أنه صعد منبر الكوفة فقال : لا تسألوني عن آية في كتاب الله ، ولا عن سنة عن رسول الله ، إلا أنبأتكم بذلك.

Shu’bah b. al-Ḥajjāj, from Simāk, from Khālīd b. ‘Ar’arah that he heard ‘Alī; and Shu’bah again narrated from al-Qāsim b. Abī Barraḥ from Abū al-Tufayl that he heard ‘Alī; and IT IS ALSO AUTHENTICALLY TRANSMITTED through many chains that Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib climbed the pulpit of Kūfah and said, “**You will not ask me about ANY verse in the Book of Allāh, or about ANY Sunnah from the Messenger of Allāh, except that I will inform you about that.**”³⁴¹

‘Alī knew *all* the Sunnahs, without absolutely *any* exception. The only way he was able to achieve this was that he placed the supreme priority upon learning the Qur’ān and Sunnah from the Messenger of Allāh. In all honesty, it is extremely difficult, if not entirely impossible, to rationalize how our Ahl al-Sunnah brothers reach their conclusion that ‘Umar was more ascetic or more knowledgeable than ‘Alī!

As a final point, let us compare both ‘Umar and ‘Alī from another angle. Imām Ibn Shabah (d. 262 H) records:

حدثنا موسى بن إسماعيل قال حدثنا سلام بن أبي مطيع عن أيوب قال قلت لنافع هل كان على عمر رضي الله عنه دين فقال ومن أين يدع عمر ديننا وقد باع رجل من ورثته ميراثه بمائة ألف.

Mūsā b. Ismā’īl – Salām b. Abī Muṭī’ – Ayūb:

I said to Nāfi’, “Did ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, have any debt?” So, he replied, “From where can ‘Umar claim to have any debt when a man from his inheritors sold his inheritance for 100,000 (dinars)?”³⁴²

³⁴¹ Abū al-Fidā Ismā’īl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr al-Qurshī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* (Dār al-Ṭaybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah], vol. 7, p. 413

³⁴² Abū Zayd ‘Umar b. Shabah al-Numayrī al-Baṣrī, *Tarikh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1417 H) [annotators: ‘Alī Muḥammad Dandal and Yāsīn Sa’d al-Dīn Bayān], vol. 2, p. 88, # 1603

Al-Ḥāfiẓ has this to say about the report:

فروى عمر بن شبة في كتاب المدينة بإسناد صحيح ان نافعا قال من أين يكون على عمر دين وقد باع رجل من ورثته ميراثه بمائة الف انتهى وهذا لا ينفي ان يكون عند موته عليه دين فقد يكون الشخص كثير المال ولا يستلزم نفي الدين عنه فلعل نافعا أنكر ان يكون دينه لم يقض

‘Umar b. Shabah recorded in *Kitāb al-Madīnah* with a **ṣaḥīḥ** chain that Nāfi’ said, “From where can ‘Umar claim to have any debt when a man from his inheritors sold his inheritance for 100,000 (dinars)?”. This does not negate the possibility that when he died he had a debt. The person can be very rich person. But, that does not necessarily mean that he does not have any debt. Perhaps, Nāfi’ was denying the existence of any unpaid debt for him.³⁴³

The dinar was the default Arabian currency at that time. It was a gold coin. In modern terms, each classical dinar equals approximately US \$193.00³⁴⁴ (one hundred and ninety-three US dollars). So, each male son of ‘Umar inherited from him net wealth worth at least US \$19, 300000 (nineteen million and three hundred thousand US dollars). If he had any daughters, her inheritance would be half of that, which is US \$9, 650000 (nine million and six hundred and fifty thousand US dollars). So, how many were ‘Umar’s children who survived him? Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr states about ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb:

قلت: فجيلة أولاده رضي الله عنه وأرضاه ثلاثة عشر ولدا، وهم زيلا أكبر، وزيد الأصغر، وعاصم، وعبد الله، وعبد الرحمن الأكبر، وعبد الرحمن الأوسط، قال الزبير بن بكار وهو أبو شحمة، وعبد الرحمن الأصغر وعبيد الله، وعياض، وحفصة، ورقية، وزينب، وفاطمة، رضي الله عنهم.

I (Ibn Kathīr) say: In summary, **his (i.e. ‘Umar’s) children, may Allāh be pleased with him, were thirteen**, and they were Zayd al-Akbar, Zayd al-Asghar, ‘Āṣim, ‘Abd Allāh, ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Akbar, ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Awsaṭ - al-Zubayr b. Bakār said he was Abū Shahmah, ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Asghar, ‘Ubayd Allāh, ‘Iyād, Ḥaṣṣah,

³⁴³ Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah li al-Ṭabā’ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 7, p. 53

³⁴⁴ See this Sunnī calculating website <http://www.e-nisab.com/calculator>

Ruqayyah, Zaynab and Fāṭimah, may Allāh be pleased with them.³⁴⁵

The second *khalīfah* had thirteen children. Only four of them were females. So, there were nine males. Of his children generally, one of them – Abū Shahmah – died during his lifetime. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463 H) explains the circumstances of his death:

وعبد الرحمن بن عمر الأوسط هو أبو شحمة الذي ضربه عمرو بن العاص بمصر
في الحمر ثم حمله إلى المدينة فضربه أبوه أدب الوالد ثم مرض ومات بعد شهر

‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Umar al-Awsaṭ was Abū Shahmah. He was the one who was beaten in Egypt by ‘Amr b. al-Āṣ for alcohol drinking. Then, he took him to Madīnah, and his father (i.e. ‘Umar) beat him as a parental correctional measure. Then he became sick and died after a month.³⁴⁶

It looks like unintentional manslaughter by the angry *khalīfah*. Whatever the case, eight males and four females inherited ‘Umar among his children alone. We will completely ignore what his wives and some other people might also have inherited from the second *khalīfah*. We will also not take into account any gifts from his vast wealth which he might have given to some people. We will equally take our eyes away from any debts he had, which was re-paid from his estate, before the remainder was distributed among his inheritors. Our focus, strictly, is upon what passed to his sons and daughters from him.

The monetary value of the inheritance of a male inheritor was US \$19, 300000 (nineteen million and three hundred thousand US dollars). For all eight sons, the total would be US \$ 154, 400000 (one hundred and fifty four million and four hundred thousand dollars). The share of each daughter was US \$9, 650000 (nine million and six hundred and fifty thousand US dollars). For the four daughters, their total inheritance was worth US \$38, 600000 (thirty-eight million and six hundred thousand US dollars). Adding US \$ 154, 400000 to \$38, 600000, we get US \$193, 000000 (one hundred and ninety-three million US dollars). This was the wealth that the children of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb alone inherited from him.

³⁴⁵ Abū al-Fidā Ismā‘īl b. Kathīr al-Dimashqī, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* (Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1408 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Shīrī], vol. 7, p. 157

³⁴⁶ Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr b. ‘Āṣim al-Nimrī al-Qurṭubī, *al-Istī‘āb fī Ma‘rifat al-Aṣḥāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl; 1st edition, 1412 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 2, p. 842, # 1443

How ‘Umar acquired such vast wealth is unclear. Before he became the *ḵhalīfah*, he was only an average businessman, with no record of any spectacular success. Moreover, he was not an oil tycoon or weapons merchant, nor was he a Silicon Valley entrepreneur. Even his entire business empire, in modern terms, would be only a small-scale rural enterprise. Considering the extreme poverty levels back then, ‘Umar’s fortune of at least US \$193, 000,000 (one hundred and ninety-three million US dollars) placed him in the position of multibillionaires in our times. He was most likely the richest man on earth during his *ḵhilāfah*.

So, what about Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī? Was he really worldlier than ‘Umar, as claimed by Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah? Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا وكيع عن إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن عمرو بن حبشي قال خطبنا الحسن بن علي بعد قتل علي رضي الله عنهما فقال: لقد فارقكم رجل بالأمس ما سبقه الأولون بعلم ولا أدركه الآخرون إن كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليبعثه ويعطيه الراية فلا ينصرف حتى يفتح له وما ترك من صفراء ولا بيضاء إلا سبعة دراهم من عطائه كان يرصدها لخادم لأهله

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Wakī’ – Isrāīl – Abū Ishāq – ‘Amr b. Ḥabashī:

Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī delivered a sermon to us after the killing of ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, and said: “Verily, a man has left you yesterday. The *ammalūn* (people of old) never surpassed him in knowledge, and the *ākhirūn* (later ones) never reach his level (in knowledge). Whoever the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, appointed him and gave him the flag, he never returned until he is granted victory (by Allāh). **He left behind no gold coin and no silver coin except 700 (seven hundred) dirhams from his salary.** He set it aside to procure with it a servant for his family.”³⁴⁷

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ says:

حسن

³⁴⁷ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 1, p. 199, # 1720

*Hasan*³⁴⁸

A dirham which was a silver coin, in modern terms, equals approximately US \$3 (three US dollars)³⁴⁹. So, ‘Alī’s monetary wealth when he died was only US \$2100 (two thousand and one hundred US dollars). Apart from his living quarters and his battle equipment (and possibly a few other minor items), there is no reliable record of him possessing and leaving behind anything else. Rather, the fact that he had to set aside seven hundred dirhams from his salary in order to purchase a servant shows that he had no other means. Perhaps, his entire estate was only US \$5,000 (five thousand US dollars) at the most. To our dear Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah, a *kehalifah* with a total estate of less than US \$5,000 (five thousand US dollars) was more worldly and materialistic than another *kehalifah* who left behind more than US \$193, 000000 (one hundred and ninety-three million US dollars). Isn’t that very weird?

³⁴⁸ *Ibid*

³⁴⁹ See <http://www.e-nisab.com/calculator>

23 VERSE OF AL-NAJWĀ

A REAL EYE-OPENER

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

و الجواب أن يقال أما الذي ثبت فهو أن عليا رضي الله عنه تصدق و ناجى ثم
نسخت الآية قبل أن يعمل بها غيره لكن الآية لم توجب الصدقة عليهم لكن أمرهم
إذا ناجوا أن يتصدقوا فمن لم يناج لم يكن عليه أن يتصدق و إذا لم تكن المناجاة
واجبة لم يكن أحد ملوما إذا ترك ما ليس بواجب

The reply is to say that what is **authentically transmitted** is that ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, gave charity and had a private conversation (with the Prophet). **Then the verse was abrogated before anyone else could act upon it.** However, the verse did not make the giving of charity compulsory upon them (i.e. the Ṣaḥābah). Rather, it ordered them to give charity whenever they had private conversation (with the Messenger). Therefore, whosoever did not have a private conversation (with the Prophet) did not have to give charity. Since having a private conversation (with the Messenger) was not compulsory, none could be criticized for abandoning what was not obligatory.³⁵⁰

He adds elsewhere:

³⁵⁰ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 160

وهكذا آية النجوى فإنه لم ينج الرسول قبل نسخها إلا علي ولم يكن علي من ترك النجوى حرج فمثل هذا العمل ليس من خصائص الأئمة ولا من خصائص علي رضي الله عنه ولا يقال إن غير علي ترك النجوى بخلا بالصدقة لأن هذا غير معلوم فإن المدة لم تطل وفي تلك المدة القصيرة قد لا يحتاج الواحد إلى النجوى وإن قدر أن هذا كان يخص بعض الناس لم يلزم أن يكون أبو بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما من هؤلاء كيف وأبو بكر رضي الله عنه قد أنفق ماله كله يوم رغب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في الصدقة وعمر رضي الله عنه جاء بنصف ماله بلا حاجة إلى النجوى فكيف يخل أحدهما بدرهمين أو ثلاثة يقدحهما بين يدي نجواه

The Verse of *al-Najwā* is like that too. This is because **none had a private conversation with the Messenger before its abrogation except ‘Alī**, and there was no blame on anyone who abandoned having a private conversation (with the Prophet). The like of this act (of ‘Alī) is not part of the exclusive merits of the Imāms, and was not from the exclusive merits of ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him. **It is also not said that others apart from ‘Alī abandoned the private conversation out of miserliness to avoid giving charity. This is because such (a reason) is not known, for the time was short.** During that short period, it was possible that one did not need to have the private conversation (with the Messenger). If some people were able to do this, it was not necessary that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, may Allāh be pleased with them both, were among such people. How can that be when it was Abū Bakr, may Allāh be pleased with him, who had spent all his wealth on the day that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, encouraged the giving of charity. ‘Umar too, may Allāh be pleased with him, gave half of his wealth (in charity), without the need for a private conversation. How could either of them have been miserly about spending two or three dirhams before his private conversation (with the Prophet)?³⁵¹

Our dear Shaykh confirms the authenticity of the narration stating that Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, was the only one who ever complied with the Verse of *al-Najwā* before its abrogation. However, he has made excuses for the failures of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān to fulfill the instruction in the verse, despite Sunnī claims about their unmatched generosity and selflessness. According to the Shaykh, the verse was shortlived. When it was revealed, Amīr al-Mūminīn enforced it. But, before anyone else could have

³⁵¹ *Ibid*, vol. 5, p. 17

a reason or chance to do likewise, it was cancelled. So, others did not have the opportunity. Besides, it was not obligatory upon Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān to comply with the verse anyway unless they intended to have private discussions with the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālihi*. Since they *might* not have intended to privately talk with the Prophet, none can blame them for not having complied with the verse before its abrogation.

In order to understand what happened with the Verse of *al-Najwā*, it is important to understand a background fact about the Ṣaḥābah, as stated by Allāh:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا أطيعوا الله وأطيعوا الرسول ولا تبطلوا أعمالكم إن الذين كفروا
وصدوا عن سبيل الله ثم ماتوا وهم كفار فلن يغفر الله لهم فلا تهنوا وتدعوا إلى
السلم وأتمم الأعلون والله معكم ولن يتركم أعمالكم إنما الحياة الدنيا لعب ولهو وإن
تؤمنوا وتتقوا يؤتكم أجوركم ولا يسألكم أموالكم إن يسألكموها فيحلفكم تبخلوا ويخرج
أضغانكم ها أتم هؤلاء تدعون لتنفقوا في سبيل الله فمنكم من يخجل ومن يخجل
فإنما يخجل عن نفسه

O you who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger and render not vain your deeds. Verily, those who disbelieve, and hinder from the Path of Allāh, then die while they are disbelievers, Allāh will not forgive them. So be not weak and ask not for peace while you are having the upper hand. Allāh is with you, and will never decrease the reward of your good deeds. The life of this world is but play and pastime, but if you believe, and fear Allāh, and avoid evil, He will grant you your wages, and will not ask you your wealth. **If He were to ask you of it (i.e. your wealth), and press you, YOU WOULD BE MISERLY, and He will bring out all your ill-wills. Behold! You are those who are called upon to spend in the Path of Allāh, YET AMONG YOU ARE SOME WHO ARE MISERS.** And whoever is miserly, he is only miserly to himself.³⁵²

A lot of the wealthy Ṣaḥābah were misers and ill-willing. This was why Allāh generalized about them in the first statement. Even if we were to reject the sweeping declaration of our Creator, we must still, at the least, accept that among the wealthy Ṣaḥābah were many who were misers. It was against this background that Allāh sent down the Verse of *al-Najwā*:

³⁵² Qur’ān 47:33-38

يا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا ناجيتم الرسول فقدموا بين يدي نجواكم صدقة ذلك خير لكم
وأطهر فإن لم تجدوا فإن الله غفور رحيم

O you who believe! When you consult with the Messenger in private, **spend something in charity before your private consultation.** That will be better and purer for you. But, if you find not (the means for it), then verily, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.³⁵³

There are two factors for consideration in the blessed verse. Firstly, it covered only those of the Ṣaḥābah who used to have private consultations with the Messenger of Allāh. Without any doubt, those were primarily the people of Madīnah and Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were chiefs among them. Secondly, the command, apparently, was directed to those of the Ṣaḥābah in Madīnah who had the means to spend in charity. Some of them were so destitute that they could not afford to give out anything. Allāh exempted such extremely poor Ṣaḥābah. There is again absolutely no doubt that Abū Bakr ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were able to afford *ṣadaqah* from their wealth.

Interestingly, once the Verse of *al-Najwā* was revealed, the wealthy and middle-income Ṣaḥābah displayed disturbing levels of miserliness. They were required to give only 1 dirham - approximately US \$3 (three US dollars) - or above in charity. But, they all – with only one exception - refrained from giving anything! They instead withheld *entirely* from privately consulting with the Prophet in order to escape spending anything in *ṣadaqah*! This was why it was only Amīr al-Mūminīn who enforced the verse. Others *deliberately* declined. They had reasons and needs, as well as very ample opportunities, to privately speak with the Messenger. However, they chose to forgo doing so, just to keep their little dirhams and dinars in their pockets. The wealthy and middle-income Ṣaḥābah had great chances to fulfil the commandment in the verse. But, all of them recoiled, except Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī!

Due to the unbecoming attitude of the Ṣaḥābah to the command in the Verse of *al-Najwā*, Allāh cancelled it:

أشفقتم أن تقدموا بين يدي نجواكم صدقات فإذ لم تفعلوا وتاب الله عليكم فأقيموا
الصلاة وآتوا الزكاة وأطيعوا الله ورسوله والله خبير بما تعملون

³⁵³ Qur’ān 58:12

Are you AFRAID of spending in charity before your private consultation? If then, do not do it, and Allāh has FORGIVEN you. So, perform *Ṣalāt* and give *Zakāt* and obey Allāh and and His Messenger. And Allāh is All-Aware of what you do.³⁵⁴

They were literally “afraid” to spend just 1 dirham (US \$3) from their wealth, while many of them had several thousands! Looking at the text of the verse, it is general. Therefore, it applied universally to all the wealthy and middle-income Ṣaḥābah living in Madīnah, except whosoever was exonerated by strong evidence. All of them had needs to privately consult with the Messenger of Allāh. But, they stayed back, “afraid” of giving *ṣadaqah*! The only one exempted from the criticism, of course, was ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib – due to the existence of authentic reports clearing him of any guilt. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) records one of them:

أخبرني عبد الله بن محمد الصيدلاني ثنا محمد بن أيوب أنبأ يحيى بن المغيرة السعدي
ثنا جرير عن منصور عن مجاهد عن عبد الرحمن بن أبي ليلى قال : قال علي بن
أبي طالب رضي الله عنه: إن في كتاب الله لآية ما عمل بها أحد ولا يعمل بها
بعدي أحد آية النجوى ليا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا ناجيتم الرسول فقدموا بين يدي
نجاكم صدقة}

‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Ṣayadlānī – Muḥammad b. Ayūb – Yahyā b. al-Mughīrah al-Sa’dī – Jarīr – Manṣūr – Mujaḥhid – ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abī Laylī – ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him:

“Verily, in the Book of Allāh, there is a verse that none complied with, and none will ever comply with, apart from me. It is the Verse of *al-Najwa* {O you who believe! When you consult with the Messenger in private, spend something in charity before your private consultation}³⁵⁵

Al-Ḥākim comments:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

³⁵⁴ Qur’ān 58:13

³⁵⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 524, # 3794

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.³⁵⁶

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) agrees:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim³⁵⁷

There is no evidence whatsoever removing the names of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān from the black list. As such, none can take them out of it. In other words, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān too were among the miserly ones! Allāh also considered their omission to have been a sin, but had “forgiven” them on His Own Accord. Apparently, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s re-invention of the incident does not tally at all with the reality.

One then wonders. Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were literally “afraid” to spend a single dirham of their wealth in *ṣadaqah*. That was their attitude to money and charity. This fact, which has Qur’ānic backing, nullifies and throws out all Sunnī claims and *riwāyāt* about the trio’s legendary financial sacrifices in the Path of Allāh. If the tales were true, the story of the Verse of *al-Najwā* would have been far different. Wait a minute! ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb stashed up for himself wealth worth more than US \$193, 000000 (one hundred and ninety-three million US dollars) during his *khilāfah*. That was about 1400 years ago when poverty levels, across the world, were beyond extreme. If he had wanted to be miserly, what else would he have done?

It would not be out of place to end this chapter with these golden Words of Allāh:

والذين يكتزون الذهب والفضة ولا ينفقونها في سبيل الله فبشرهم بعباد أليم يوم
يحيى عليها في نار جهنم فتكوى بها جباههم وجنوبهم وظهورهم هذا ما كنزتم
لأنفسكم فذوقوا ما كنتم تكزون

And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allāh, announce unto them a painful torment. On the Day when it will be heated in the Fire of *Jabannam* and with it will be branded their

³⁵⁶ *Ibid*

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*

foreheads, their flanks, and their backs: “This is what you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard.”³⁵⁸

³⁵⁸ Qur’ān 9:34-35

24 ḤADĪTH AL-RĀYAT

A TRULY MESSY ONE

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

قال الرافضي والرابع أنه كان أشجع الناس....

والجواب أنه لا ريب أن عليا رضي الله عنه كان من شجعان الصحابة ... أما قوله
إنه كان أشجع الناس فهذا كذب بل كان أشجع الناس رسول الله صلى الله عليه و
سلم

The Rāfiḍī said: “The fourth (point) is that he (‘Alī) was the bravest of mankind....

The reply is that there is no doubt that ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, was one of the brave ones among the Ṣaḥābah ... As for his statement that he (‘Alī) was the bravest of mankind, that is a lie. Rather, the bravest of mankind was the Messenger of Allāh.³⁵⁹

Our dear Shaykh has removed the words of the Shīʿī scholar from its proper context. The style of expression adopted by the latter was very common in Arabic texts, and the word “mankind” in it *always* excluded the

³⁵⁹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 8, pp. 75-76

Prophet, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālīhi*! In other words, when the Shī‘ī scholar mentioned “the bravest of mankind”, the phrase “*after* the Messenger of Allāh” is automatically implied. Similar expressions can be found in these words of Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, a very senior Ṣaḥābī, as documented by Imām al-Hākim (d. 403 H):

يا هذا على ما تشتم علي بن أبي طالب ألم يكن أول من أسلم ألم يكن أول من
صلى مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ألم يكن ازهد الناس ألم يكن أعلم الناس؟

“O you! On what basis do you curse ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib? Is he not the first to accept Islām? Is he not the first to perform *Ṣalāt* with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him? **Is he not the most ascetic of mankind? Is he not the most knowledgeable of mankind?**”³⁶⁰

Al-Hākim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.³⁶¹

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) confirms:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim³⁶²

Will our dear Shaykh accuse this noble Ṣaḥābī of telling lies? Anyway, the Shaykh himself makes absolutely no attempt to claim Abū Bakr or ‘Umar was braver than Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, in physical battle. Rather, he re-defines the word “bravery”, and then plays a new card:

والشجاعة تفسر بشيئين أحدهما قوة القلب وثباته عند المخاوف والثاني شدة القتال
بالبدن بأن يقتل كثيرا ويقتل قتلا عظيما والأول هو الشجاعة وأما الثاني فيدل على
قوة البدن وعمله وليس كل من كان قوي البدن كان قوي القلب ولا بالعكس

³⁶⁰ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Hākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 571, # 6121

³⁶¹ *Ibid*

³⁶² *Ibid*

And “bravery” is explained with two things. **One of them is strength of the heart, and its firmness in the face of fear.** The second is great strength in physical fighting, to kill a lot of people. **Only the first is bravery.** As for the second, it (only) proves physical strength. And, not everyone who is physically strong has a strong heart, and not vice versa.³⁶³

So, “bravery” is only to have a fearless heart. Whether this translates into action on the battlefield or not is irrelevant. Rather, the warrior who firmly faces multiple enemy fighters in battle, and kills them is not brave at all. He is only “physically strong”. Our Shaykh justifies his new definition in this manner:

والنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كان أكمل الناس في هذه الشجاعة التي هي المقصودة
في أئمة الحرب ولم يقتل بيده إلا أبي بن خلف قتله يوم أحد ولم يقتل بيده أحدا لا
قبلها ولا بعدها وكان أشجع من جميع الصحابة

The Prophet, peace be upon him, was the most perfect of mankind in this type of bravery (i.e. of the heart) which was what was expected in the war commanders. He never killed anyone with his hand except Ubayy b. Khalaf. He killed him on the Day of Uḥud, and never killed anyone else before or after them. Yet, he was braver than all the Ṣaḥābah.³⁶⁴

This analogy does not work in the cases of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān though. The Messenger of Allāh was the ruler of Arabia at that time. Heads of state are not expected *anywhere* to participate in battle like foot soldiers. Rather, they are to be shielded from the enemy as much as possible. As for Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān, they were ordinary soldiers. Therefore, they had every obligation and chance to participate in multiple combats with enemy fighters. But what happened?

Obviously, since Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s new definition is hinged upon the roles of the Prophet in battle, it is inapplicable in the cases of anyone who was not the head of state at the times of the battles. Moreover, one honestly wonders about the logicity of the Shaykh’s separation of fearlessness of

³⁶³ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minbāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 8, p. 77

³⁶⁴ *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 78

the heart from battle valour. Can a person with a timid heart willfully confront fully armed, firmly determined, well-trained and highly experienced enemy fighters, in *mortal* combats, in battle?

But then, what exactly does Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah want us to pick from his incongruous definition? He minces no words about it:

وإذا كانت الشجاعة المطلوبة من الأئمة بشجاعة القلب فلا ريب أن أبا بكر كان
أشجع من عمر وعمر أشجع من عثمان وعلي

Since the type of bravery that is required from the rulers is the bravery of the heart, then there is no doubt that Abū Bakr was braver than ‘Umar, and ‘Umar was braver than ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī.³⁶⁵

Strange indeed! Were Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān rulers during the lifetime of the Prophet?! In any case, there is an implicit admission in these wild gymnastics of our dear Shaykh that the trio were no match at all for Amīr al-Mūminīn in terms of physical strength and battle successes. However, he *must* nonetheless place them above him at any cost. Therefore, he lumps things up and tables patently desperate excuses. He also apparently assumes – contrary to logic - that the heroic achievements of ‘Alī in battle required less courage than the trio’s relative battle redundancy!

Then comes the big question, and Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah makes another attempt:

وأما قوله ما انهزم قط فهو في ذلك كأي بكر وعمر وطلحة والزبير وغيرهم من
الصحابة رضي الله عنهم فالقول في أنه ما انهزم كالقول في أن هؤلاء ما انهزموا قط
ولم يعرف لأحد من هؤلاء هزيمة وإن كان قد وقع شيء في الباطن ولم ينقل فيمكن
أن عليا وقع منه ما لم ينقل والمسلمون كانت لهم هزيمتان يوم أحد ويوم حنين ولم
ينقل أن أحدا من هؤلاء انهزم بل المذكور في السير والمغازي أن أبا بكر وعمر ثبتا
مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يوم أحد ويوم حنين ولم يهزما مع من انهزم ومن
نقل أنهما انهزما يوم حنين فكذبه معلوم وإنما الذي انهزم يوم أحد عثمان وقد عفا الله
عنه وما نقل من انهزام أبي بكر وعمر بالراية يوم حنين فمن الأكاذيب المختلقة التي
افتراها المفترون

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 79

As for his (i.e. the Shīʿī scholar’s) statement that he (‘Alī) NEVER fled (the battlefield), then he was, in this (merit), like Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr and others among the Ṣaḥābah, may Allāh be pleased with them. The statement that he (‘Alī) never fled away is like the statement that these people too never fled away. It is not known that any of them ever fled away. And if something had happened (from them) in secret which has not been reported, it is possible that something happened from ‘Alī too which has not been reported.

The Muslims fled away the battlefield twice – on the Day of Uḥud and on the Day of Ḥunayn and it is not reported that anyone of these people fled away. What is mentioned in the *Sīrah* (i.e. biography of the Prophet) and *al-Maghāzī* (i.e. reports of battles) books is that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar stood firmly with the Prophet, peace be upon him, on the Day of Uḥud and on the Day of Ḥunayn and did not flee away with those who fled away. Whoever reported that they both fled away on the Day of Ḥunayn, his lie is obvious. **The only one (of them) who fled away on the Day of Uḥud was ‘Uthmān**, and Allāh has forgiven him. As for what is reported concerning the flight of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar with the flag on the Day of Ḥunayn, it is one of the fabrications which the forgers forged.³⁶⁶

The Shaykh agrees that Amīr al-Mūminīn never fled the battlefield, no matter how hopeless things became. This is very crucial in determining who was brave and who was cowardly. There is no doubt that anyone who flees the battlefield is a coward. Interestingly, our Shaykh confesses that ‘Uthmān was a coward who fled away on the Day of Uḥud. No wonder, he never attempts anywhere to claim that ‘Uthmān was braver than ‘Alī. But then, he argues that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar too, like ‘Alī, never fled away. Apparently, if he ever admits that either of the duo was a coward who fled away, his entire argument crashes. One fact, however, remains undeniable. There are reports indicating that both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar fled the battlefields. Our Shaykh instinctively throws them out as fabrications. He also seeks to counter such reports with what is “mentioned” – with no proof of authenticity - in the history books. A fair researcher, of course, would like to examine these “forged” reports alleging Abū Bakr’s and ‘Umar’s cowardice, to determine the truth of the matter by himself.

Well, according to an authentic report, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān fled the battlefields repeatedly on different occasions. It did not happen once, twice or thrice. Rather, on several occasions of battle, the trio fled away, as

³⁶⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 8, p. 91

documented by Imām Muslim (d. 261 H):

حدثنا محمد بن أبي بكر المقدمي وحامد بن عمر البكراني ومحمد بن عبد الأعلى قالوا
حدثنا المعتمر (وهو ابن سليمان) قال سمعت أبي عن أبي عثمان قال لم يبق مع
رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في بعض تلك الأيام التي قاتل فيهن رسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم غير طلحة وسعد عن حديثهما

Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Muqaddamī, Hāmid b. ‘Umar al-Bakrāwī
and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-A’lā – al-Mu’tamar (and he is Ibn
Sulaymān) – father – Abū ‘Uthmān:

“None remained with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him,
on some of the DAYS in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be
upon him, was fighting apart from Ṭalḥah and Sa’d. They both (i.e.
Ṭalḥah and Sa’d) narrated that to me.”³⁶⁷

On the days of the successive battles, everyone else used to flee –
apparently including Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān – except Ṭalḥah and
Sa’d.

Among such days, the Day of Uḥud (3 AH) readily comes to mind. The
most notorious runner on that day was ‘Uthmān. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah
himself admits this. Nonetheless, this is an explicit *ḥadīth* from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-
Bukhārī* confirming his flight:

حدثنا موسى بن إسماعيل حدثنا أبو عوانة حدثنا عثمان هو ابن موهب قال: جاء
رجل من أهل مصر ورج البيت فرأى قوما جلوسا فقال من هؤلاء القوم؟ فقالوا
هؤلاء قريش قال فمن الشيخ فيهم؟ قالوا عبد الله بن عمر قال يا ابن عمر إني
سألك عن شيء فحدثني هل تعلم أن عثمان فر يوم أحد؟ قال نعم.

Mūsā b. Ismā’īl – Abū ‘Awānah – ‘Uthmān b. Mūhib:

An Egyptian man came and performed the *Hajj* to the House. So, he
saw some people sitting, and asked, “Who are these people?” They
said, “They are the tribe of Quraysh.” He said, “Who is the old man

³⁶⁷ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār
Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 1879, # 2414
(47)

amongst them?” They replied, “He is ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar.” He said, “O Ibn Umar! I want to ask you about something; please tell me about it. **Do you know that ‘Uthmān fled away on the Day of Uḥud?**” Ibn ‘Umar said, **"Yes."**³⁶⁸

Referring to this ugly incident, Allāh states:

إِذْ تَصْعَدُونَ وَلَا تَلَوْنَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أَخْرَاكُمْ فَأَتَابَكُمْ غَمًا بَغْمًا لَكِيلًا
تَحْزَنُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

(And remember) when you ran away (dreadfully) without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger was in your rear calling you back.³⁶⁹

The Prophet was calling ‘Uthmān while he was fleeing away. He heard him, but did not even cast a side glance at anyone, not even at Muḥammad! He was completely frightened, and sought to run away from the Messenger of Allāh as quickly as they could, in order to save his own life. It was indeed a great flight, and a great tragedy!

On the Day of Ḥunayn (8 AH) too, the Ṣaḥābah fled away again! This is referred to by Allāh in His Book:

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا
وَضَاقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُم مُّدْبِرِينَ

Truly, Allāh has helped you on many battlefields, **and on the Day of Ḥunayn** when you rejoiced at your great number but it availed you naught and the earth, as vast as it is, was straitened for you. **Then you fled away.**³⁷⁰

The statement is general. Therefore, everyone fled except whoever there is concrete evidence clearing him. ‘Umar, in particular, was one of the runners on that day. Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) records:

³⁶⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 3, p. 1352, # 3495

³⁶⁹ Qur’ān 3:153

³⁷⁰ Qur’ān 9:25

وقال الليث حدثني يحيى بن سعيد عن عمر بن كثير بن أفلح عن أبي محمد مولى أبي قتادة أن أبا قتادة قال لما كان حنين نظرت إلى رجل من المسلمين يقاتل رجلا من المشركين وآخر من المشركين يختله من ورائه ليقنته فأسرعت إلى الذي يختله فرفع يده ليضربني وأضرب يده فقطعتها ثم أخذني فضممني ضما شديدا حتى تخوفت ثم ترك فتحلل ودفعته ثم قتلته وانهزم المسلمون وانهزمت معهم فإذا بعمر بن الخطاب في الناس فقلت له ما شأن الناس؟ قال أمر الله ثم تراجع الناس إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

Al-Layth – Yahyā b. Saʿīd – ‘Umar b. Kathīr b. Aflah – Abū Muḥammad, freed slave of Abū Qatādah – Abū Qatādah:

On the Day of Ḥunayn, I saw a Muslim fighting with one of the pagans and another pagan was hiding himself behind the Muslim in order to kill him. So I hurried towards the pagan who was hiding behind the Muslim to kill him, and he raised his hand to hit me but I hit his hand and cut it off. That man got hold of me and pressed me so hard that I was afraid, then I knelt down and his grip became loose and I pushed him and killed him. **The Muslims fled, and I too fled WITH THEM. Suddenly, I met ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb AMONGST THE PEOPLE** and I asked him, “What is wrong with THE PEOPLE?” He said, “It is the Command of Allāh.” Then THE PEOPLE returned to the Messenger of Allāh.³⁷¹

Abū Qatādah referred to those Ṣaḥābah who fled away as “the people”. They fled but later returned to the Messenger at the battlefield. The interesting part is that while Abū Qatādah himself was fleeing away “with them”, he met ‘Umar “amongst the people”! In other words, ‘Umar too was fleeing away with the people! He was “amongst” the people speeding off the battle ground. If the second *ḵhalīfah* had stayed with the Messenger of Allāh, Abū Qatādah – who had run away from the Prophet – would never had met ‘Umar “amongst the people”!

A rather unfortunate turn was ‘Umar’s attempted justification of the Ṣaḥābah’s run from the battlefield. He claimed that those Ṣaḥābah – including himself – were obeying “the command” of Allāh. We searched the Qur’ān and *aḥādīth* to locate this “command”. But, we came up with

³⁷¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḡhīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 4, p. 1570, # 4067

nothing like it. Rather, this is what we read:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا لقيتم الذين كفروا زحفا فلا تولوهم الأدبار ومن يولهم يومئذ
دبره إلا متحرفا لقتال أو متحيزا إلى فئة فقد باء بغضب من الله ومأواه جهنم وبئس
المصير

O you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve, in a battlefield, **never flee from them**. And whoever flees away on such a day – unless it be a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop, - he indeed has drawn upon himself Wrath from Allāh. **And his abode is Hellfire**, and worse indeed is that destination!³⁷²

Does it really look like the Ṣaḥābah were obeying Allāh with their great flight? We do not think so.

³⁷² Qur’ān 8:15-16

25 ḤADĪTH AL-RĀYAT

INVESTIGATING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Before Ḥunayn (8 AH), ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb ran away from the battlefield at least twice – during Khandaq (5 AH) and at Khaybar (7 AH). It was at Khaybar that *Ḥadīth al-Rāyat* was declared by the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālihi*. We will therefore briefly examine what the second *khalīfah* did during the Khandaq battle before moving on to Khaybar. Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يزيد قال انا محمد بن عمرو عن أبيه عن جده علقمة بن وقاص قال أخبرني عائشة قالت خرجت يوم الخندق أثار الناس قالت فسمعت وئيد الأرض ورأيي يعني حس الأرض قالت فالتفت فإذا أنا بسعد بن معاذ ومعه بن أخيه الحارث بن أوس يحمل مجنة قالت فجلست إلى الأرض فمر سعد وعليه درع من حديد قد خرجت منها أطرافه فأنا أتخوف على أطراف سعد قالت وكان سعد من أعظم الناس وأطولهم قالت فمر وهو يرتجز ويقول (ليت قليلا يدرك الهيجا جمل ... ما أحسن الموت إذا حان الأجل) قالت فقمتم فاقتحمت حديقة فإذا فيها نفر من المسلمين وإذا فيهم عمر بن الخطاب وفيهم رجل عليه سبعة له يعني مغفرا فقال عمر ما جاء بك لعمرى والله إنك لجرئة وما يؤمنك أن يكون بلاء أو يكون تحوز قالت فما زال يلومني حتى تمنيت أن الأرض انشقت لي ساعتئذ فدخلت فيها قالت فرفع الرجل السبعة عن وجهه فإذا طلحة بن عبيد الله فقال يا عمر ويحك انك قد اكثرت منذ اليوم وأين التحوز أو الفرار إلا إلى الله عز

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yazīd – Muḥammad b. ‘Amr – his father – his grandfather ‘Alqamah b. Waqqās – ‘Āishah:

I went out on the Day of al-Khandaq **and I stood behind the people.** So, I heard footsteps coming from behind me. I turned around and saw Sa’d b. Mu’ādh, and his nephew al-Ḥārith b. Aws was carrying his armour. Therefore, I sat down on the ground and Sa’d passed by, wearing an iron armour from which his limbs had come out. I was afraid of Sa’d’s limbs. Sa’d was one of the most huge and tallest people. Sa’d passed by, singing a battle song, saying: “Very soon the battle will meet a camel ... What a good death it is when the time has come.”

Then I stood up and entered a garden. There was a small group of Muslims there, and ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was amongst them and there was another man who was wearing a mask. ‘Umar said: “What brought you here? I swear by my life and I swear by Allāh, you are a reckless woman! What assures you against the occurrence of a disaster or capture?” He kept blaming me so much until I wished that the earth would split open for me so that I could enter into it. Then the (masked) man removed the mask from his face, and he was Ṭalḥah b. ‘Ubayd Allāh. So he said, “Woe to you, O Umar! You have said too much today! And where is the writhing movement or the flight except to Allāh the Almighty?”³⁷³

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) has copied the exact same narration in his *Ṣaḥīḥah*, and states:

أخرجه الإمام أحمد (6 / 141 - 142) عن محمد بن عمرو عن أبيه عن علقمة ابن وقاص، قال: أخبرتني عائشة قالت....

قلت: وهذا إسناد حسن. وقال الهيثمي في " مجمع الزوائد " (6 / 128): " رواه أحمد وفيه محمد بن عمرو بن علقمة وهو حسن الحديث، وبقية رجاله ثقات ". وقال الحافظ في " الفتح " (11 / 43): " وسنده حسن ".

³⁷³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 6, p. 141, # 25140

Imām Aḥmad (6/141-142) recorded it from Muḥammad b. ‘Amr - his father - ‘Alqamah b. Waqqās – ‘Āishah....

I (Al-Albānī) say: **This chain is ḥasan**. Al-Haythamī said in *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (6/128): “Aḥmad recorded it and in the chain is Muḥammad b. ‘Amr b. ‘Alqamah, and his *ḥadīth* is ḥasan, and the other narrators in the chain are trustworthy”. Al-Ḥāfiẓ also said in *al-Fath* (11/43): “**And its chain is ḥasan**”.³⁷⁴

Imām Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 H) too has documented the report in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*³⁷⁵. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī says:

حسن

*Hasan*³⁷⁶

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ confirms this:

حديث حسن

A ḥasan ḥadīth³⁷⁷

The question is: what was ‘Umar and his few colleagues doing in a garden, hidden from view, while the Messenger of Allāh and the other Ṣaḥābah were actively in battle against the allied forces of the pagans? The people, as testified by Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah, were at the warfront. She was standing *behind* the fighting soldiers. So, ‘Umar and his small band were completely away from the front, *at the back* of everyone else. Was it a tactical *land* ambush by them? But, that was not possible! Firstly, it was a *trench* war. If anything, ‘Umar and his colleagues should be standing with the Prophet

³⁷⁴ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqḥihāh wa Fawāidihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 1, pp. 143-145, # 67

³⁷⁵ Abū Ḥatīm Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad b. Ḥibbān b. Mu’adh b. Ma’bad al-Tamīmī al-Dārimī al-Bustī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bi Tartīb Ibn Balbān* (Beirut: Muassasat al-Risālah; 2nd edition, 1414 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 15, pp. 498-501, # 7028

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*

³⁷⁷ *Ibid*

at the front - by the trench - preventing the enemies of Allāh from successfully crossing over. Secondly, the Messenger did not permit any Ṣaḥābī to leave his presence, as reported by the Qur’ān about the Battle of Khandaq:

وَإِذْ قَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَارْجِعُوا وَيَسْتَأْذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمُ النَّبِيَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِيَ بِعَوْرَةٍ إِنْ يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا وَلَوْ دَخَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سَأَلُوا الْفِتْنَةَ لَا تَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا فِيهَا إِلَّا يَسِيرًا وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ لَا يُولُونَ الدُّبَارَ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ مُسَوَّلًا قُلْ لَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمْ الْفِرَارُ إِنْ فَرَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ أَوِ الْقَتْلِ وَإِذَا لَا تَمْتَعُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

And when a party of them said, “O people of Yathrib! You do not stand any chance. Therefore, return”. And a band of them asked for permission of the Prophet, saying: “Truly, our homes are vulnerable!” But they (i.e. their houses) were not vulnerable. **They (i.e. those soldiers) only wished to flee!** And if the enemy had entered upon them from its (i.e. Madīnah’s) borders, and they had been asked to commit sedition (against Islām), they would surely have committed it and would have only hesitated a little. And indeed they had already made a covenant with Allāh not to flee, and a covenant with Allāh must be answered for. **Say: Running away will not benefit you** if you flee from death or killing, and then you will enjoy no more than a little while!”³⁷⁸

The verses confirm that the enemy never breached the borders of Madīnah. They further establish that the homes of the people of the city were safe. Of course, it was the Battle of Khandaq (i.e. the Battle of the Trench). Therefore, all the fighting was supposed to be done *at the trench*, not within the boundaries of Madīnah. Lastly, there is zero evidence of any deployment of anyone by the Prophet, during the battle, to mount any ambush in any garden in the city!

As such, the presence of ‘Umar and his colleagues in a safe garden had absolutely no military value or legitimacy. Moreover, one of them was masking his face to conceal his identity. Meanwhile, he too had no tactical or strategic reason to use a mask. It is obvious, from the circumstances and his conduct, that he felt shame for what they were doing in the garden, and would not like anyone to identify him with it, if they were detected. But, Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah knew his voice very well, being his relative. So, it

³⁷⁸ Qur’ān 33:13-16

was pointless for him to conceal his identity before her while criticizing ‘Umar.

‘Umar and his colleagues were, without doubt, hiding from battle. They had fled! While the other Muslims were busy preventing the collapse of Madīnah by blocking any crossover of the trench by the enemy, he and his colleagues were breathing safely in their hideout. Judging from the panic and instinctive outbursts of ‘Umar, one could also say that he was not aware of the real situation of things in the city. He apparently thought that the enemy had entered it, and that it was extremely risky to move around. That explains why he moved into, and remained in, the garden in the first place.

At Khaybar, our second *khalīfah* repeated his old feat. Imām al-Ḥākīm (d. 403 H) records:

أخبرنا أبو العباس محمد بن أحمد المجبوبي بمرور ثنا سعيد بن مسعود ثنا عبيد الله بن موسى ثنا نعيم بن حكيم عن أبي موسى الحنفي عن علي رضي الله عنه قال : سار النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى خيبر فلما أتاها بعث عمر رضي الله تعالى عنه وبعث معه الناس إلى مدينتهم أو قصرهم فقاتلوه فلم يلبثوا أن هزموا عمر وأصحابه فجاءوا يمينونه ويحينهم فسار

Abū al-‘Abbās Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Maḥbūbī – Sa’īd b. Mas’ūd – ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā – Na’īm b. Ḥakīm – Abū Mūsā al-Ḥanafī – ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, journeyed to Khaybar. When he arrived there, he appointed ‘Umar (as commander) and appointed some people with him (as his troops) to conquer their city or castle. So, they (‘Umar and his troops) fought them (i.e. the people of Khaybar). **But ‘Umar and his troops did not hesitate before fleeing.** So, they came back **and they (the troops) accused him (‘Umar) of COWARDICE** while he too accused them of cowardice.³⁷⁹

Al-Ḥākīm says:

³⁷⁹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākīm al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 40, # 4340

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain³⁸⁰

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) confirms:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*³⁸¹

Imām al-Hindī (d. 975 H) copies a fuller version:

عن علي قال : سار رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلى خيبر فلما أتاها رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بعث عمر ومعه الناس إلى مدينتهم وإلى قصرهم فقاتلوهم فلم يلبثوا أن هزموا عمر وأصحابه فجاء يجبنهم ويحبسونه فسأ ذلك رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فقال : لأبعثن عليهم رجلا يحب الله ورسوله ويحبه الله ورسوله يقاتلهم حتى يفتح الله له ليس بفرار فتطاول الناس لها ومدوا أعناقهم يروونه أنفسهم رجاء ما قال فمكث رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ساعة فقال : أين علي ؟ فقالوا : هو أرمد قال : ادعوه لي فلما أتته فتح عيني ثم ثقل فيها ثم أعطاني اللواء فانطلقت به سعيًا خشية أن يحدث رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فيها حدثًا أو في حتى أتيتهم فقاتلتهم فبرز مرحب يرتجز وبرزت له أرتجز كما يرتجز حتى التقينا فقتله الله بيدي وانهمز أصحابه فتحصنوا وأغلقوا الباب فأتينا الباب فلم أزل أعالجه حتى فتحه الله

Narrated ‘Alī:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, journeyed to Khaybar. When the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, arrived there, he appointed ‘Umar (as commander) and with him some people (as his troops) to conquer their city or castle. So, they (‘Umar and his troops) fought them (i.e. the people of Khaybar). **But ‘Umar and his troops did not hesitate before fleeing.** So, they came back and he accused them of cowardice **while they too (the troops) accused him**

³⁸⁰ *Ibid*

³⁸¹ *Ibid*

(‘Umar) of COWARDICE. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, roundly condemned that and said, “I will certainly appoint over you a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh and His Messenger too love him. He will fight them until Allāh grants him victory. **He is not someone who flees.**”

So, the people longed for it (i.e. the expedition) and extended their necks, each of them wishing that he be the chosen one. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, remained silent for a while and then said: **“Where is Alī?”** They said: “He is sore-eyed.” He said: “Summon him for me.” When I came to him, he opened my eyes and put his saliva on them. Then, he gave the flag to me and so I proceeded fast, fearing that the Messenger of Allāh might make a new decision concerning it (i.e. the expedition), or me, until I reached them (i.e. the people of Khaybar). So, I fought them. Then Marḥab (the warrior of Khaybar) offered a duel challenge, reciting war poetry and I accepted his duel challenge, reciting war poetry like people do, until we clashed and Allāh killed him through my hand. As a result, his companions fled away into their castle, and locked the door. We went to the door and I did not stop trying to break it until Allāh opened it.³⁸²

Al-Hindī comments:

والبزار وسنده حسن

Recorded by al-Bazzār and its chain is *ḥasan*.³⁸³

‘Alī’s encounter with Marḥab is documented by Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) as well:

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا هاشم بن القاسم ح وحدثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم
أخبرنا أبو عامر العقدي كلاهما عن عكرمة ابن عمار ح وحدثنا عبدالله بن
عبدالرحمن الدارمي وهذا حديثه أخبرنا أبو علي الحنفي عبيدالله بن عبدالمجيد
حدثنا عكرمة (وهو ابن عمار) حدثني إياس بن سلمة حدثني أبي قال:

³⁸² ‘Alī b. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanẓ al-Ummāl fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wa Afāl* (Beirut: Muassasat al-Risālah; 1989 H), vol. 10, p. 743, # 30119

³⁸³ *Ibid*

.... ثم أرسلني إلى علي وهو أرمد فقال لأعطين الراية رجلاً يحب الله ورسوله أو يحبه الله ورسوله قال فأتيت علياً فنجت به أقرده وهو أرمد حتى أتيت به رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فبسق في عينيه فبرأ وأعطاه الراية وخرج مرحب فقال قد علمت خير أني مرحب ... شاكى السلاح بطل مجرب إذا الحروب أقبلت تلهب فقال علي أنا الذي سمتني أمي حيدره ... كليث الغابات كره المنظره أوفيهـم بالصاع كيل السندره قال فضرب رأس مرحب فقتله ثم كان الفتح على يديه

Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybah – Hāshim b. al-Qāsim – Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm – Abū ‘Āmir al-‘Aqdī – ‘Ikrimah b. ‘Āmir AND ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Dārimī – Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥanafī ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Majīd – ‘Ikrimah b. ‘Āmir – Iyās b. Salamah – my father (Salamah):

.... Then he (the Messenger) sent me to ‘Alī, and he (‘Alī) was sore-eyed. So, he (the Prophet) said, “I verily will give the flag to a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger or whom Allāh and His Messenger love.” So, I went to ‘Alī and brought him, and he was sore-eyed, until I brought him to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, who applied his saliva to his eyes and he got well. So, he (the Prophet) gave him the flag and Marḥab (at the Khaybar battle ground) came out and said (during the duel), “Khaybar has already known that I am Marḥab, a fully-armed and well-tried valorous warrior whenever war comes, spreading its flames.” ‘Alī replied, “I am the one whose mother named him Haydar, like a lion of the forest with a terror-striking countenance. I give them (i.e. my opponents) the measure of *sandara* (i.e. a heavy blow) in exchange for *ṣa’* (i.e. a small punch).” **‘Alī struck the head of Marḥab and killed him. So, the victory was through his hands.**³⁸⁴

Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) has recorded the same report³⁸⁵, and Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ says:

إسناده صحيح على شرط مسلم

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of Muslim.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 3, p. 1433, # 1807 (132)

³⁸⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 4, p. 51, # 16586

³⁸⁶ *Ibid*

The Prophet of Allāh testified that Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, was NOT a person who fled in *any* circumstance, however difficult. He too demonstrated that by accepting the challenge of Marḥab in a mortal combat. As such, while all the other Ṣaḥābah – including Abū Bakr and ‘Umar – were repeatedly fleeing the battlefields, ‘Alī always stayed till the end. The matter, apparently, was *very* well-known among the Ṣaḥābah, which was why some of them did not bother mentioning his name while listing the firm ones at each battle. He made every list by default, and it might be pointless repeating his blessed name while everyone was already aware of this unique status of his.

Imām Aḥmad further records another report, with an interesting additional detail:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا زيد بن الحباب حدثني الحسين بن واقد حدثني عبد الله بن بريدة حدثني أبي بريدة قال حاصرنا خيبر فأخذ اللواء أبو بكر فانصرف ولم يفتح له ثم أخذه من الغد عمر فخرج فخرج ولم يفتح له وأصاب الناس يومئذ شدة وحمد فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم انى دافع اللواء غدا إلى رجل يحبه الله ورسوله ويحب الله ورسوله لا يرجع حتى يفتح له فبتنا طيبة أنفسنا ان الفتح غدا فلما ان أصبح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى الغداة ثم قام قائما فدعا باللواء والناس على مصافهم فدعا عليا وهو أرمد فتغل في عينيه ودفع إليه اللواء وفتح له قال بريدة وأنا فممن تطاول لها

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Zayd b. al-Ḥabāb – al-Ḥusayn b. Wāqid – ‘Abd Allāh b. Buraydah – Abū Buraydah:

We besieged Khaybar. **So, Abū Bakr took the flag and went. But, he did not achieve victory.** Then, the next day, ‘Umar took it (i.e. the flag), and went and returned without achieving victory. On that day, the people encountered hardship and fatigue. Therefore, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “I will tomorrow give the flag to a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh and His Messenger love him too. **He will not return unless he has achieved victory.**” So, we became absolutely certain that victory would be achieved the next day.

When it was morning, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him,

performed the morning *Ṣalāt*. Then he stood and asked that the flag be brought to him. The people were on their lines. So, he summoned ‘Alī and he (‘Alī) was sore-eyed. Then he spit into his eyes and gave him the flag, **and he (‘Alī) achieved victory**. I was one of those longing for it (i.e. the flag).³⁸⁷

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ states:

حديث صحيح وهذا إسناد قوي من أجل حسين بن واقد المروزي

It is a *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*, and this chain is strong (*qawī*) due to Ḥusayn b. Wāqīd al-Marūzī.³⁸⁸

Apparently, Abū Bakr was the first to flee the battlefield at Khaybar, and then ‘Umar. Marḥab must have offered both of them duel challenges – as he did to Amīr al-Mūminīn – which they obviously declined and then sped away. The only way to conquer Khaybar was to kill Marḥab, who was their legendary warrior, as ‘Alī demonstrated. The fact that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar returned without victory is evidence that both of them, as army commanders, feared Marḥab and therefore avoided him.

Imām al-Hindī copies a related report:

عن عبد الرحمن بن أبي ليلى قال : كان علي يخرج في الشتاء في إزار ورداء ثوبين خفيفين و.... قال : أو ما كنت معنا يا أبا ليلى بخير ؟ قلت : بلى والله قد كنت معكم قال : فإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بعث أبا بكر فصار بالناس فانهزم حتى رجع إليه وبعث عمر فانهزم بالناس حتى انتهى إليه فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : لا أعطين الراية رجلاً يحب الله ورسوله ويحبه الله ورسوله يفتح الله له ليس بفرار فأرسل إلي فدعاني فأتيته وأنا أرمد لا أبصر شيئاً فقتل في عيني

‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Laylī:

‘Alī used to come out in winter wearing light clothes and ... he (‘Alī) said (to me), “Were you not with us, O Abū Laylī, at Khaybar?” I said, “Yes, by Allāh, I was with you.” He said, “Verily, the Messenger of

³⁸⁷ *Ibid*, vol. 5, p. 353, # 23043

³⁸⁸ *Ibid*

Allāh, peace be upon him, appointed Abū Bakr as commander and he despatched with (some) people. **BUT HE (ABŪ BAKR) FLED** until he returned to him (i.e. the Prophet). And he appointed ‘Umar too as army commander, and HE (‘UMAR) TOO FLED with the people (i.e. his troops) until he got back to him (i.e. the Messenger). So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, ‘I certainly will give the flag to a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh and His Messenger love him too. Allāh will grant him victory. **He is not someone who flees.**’ Therefore, he sent for me, and I got to him. I was sore-eyed, and could not see anything. So, he spit into my eye.”³⁸⁹

Al-Hindī comments:

والبزار وابن جرير وصححه

Al-Bazzār recorded it, as well as Ibn Jarīr (al-Ṭabarī) WHO DECLARED IT *ṢAḤĪḤ*³⁹⁰

At this point, let us do some mathematics:

1. Abū Bakr and ‘Umar used to flee from battlefields. Alī never fled, not even once.
2. ‘Alī accepted and won at least the duel challenge at Khaybar. Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ran away from the same duel challenge.
3. Alī was never accused of cowardice by anyone. Rather, the Prophet testified in favour of his absolute bravery and military doggedness. By contrast, ‘Umar was charged with cowardice by his own troops!
4. Abū Bakr and ‘Umar returned from the battlefield, defeated and humiliated. Meanwhile, ‘Alī never left the battlefield until he had achieved victory.
5. The Messenger of Allāh had absolute confidence in ‘Alī’s military prowess, and was completely certain that the latter would never fail in his expeditions. On the other hand, both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar disappointed him in their military assignments, and he apparently did not have full confidence in their military abilities.

The question is: who was braver? Was it Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib? Or, were Abū Bakr and ‘Umar braver than him, as claimed by Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah? Even if we accepted our Shaykh’s re-definition of “bravery” as

³⁸⁹ ‘Alī b. Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanẓ al-Ummāl fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wa Af’āl* (Beirut: Muassasat al-Risālah; 1989 H), vol. 13, p. 104, # 36388

³⁹⁰ *Ibid*

fearlessness of the heart, how can anyone still claim that Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were “brave” *at all* despite that they used to flee the battlefield? Can a person who runs away from battle be said to have a fearless heart? Moreover, what made Amīr al-Mūminīn so firm on the battlefield? Was it not his fearless heart? From whatever angle we look at it, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were timid cowards, while ‘Alī was a true warrior, with a completely fearless heart.

Our Shaykh is well aware that with the above facts, his theory can never stand. So, he goes on a voyage of historical revisionism:

فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قبل قدومه لأعطين الراية رجلاً يحب الله و
رسوله و يحبه الله و رسوله يفتح الله علي يديه و لم تكن الراية قبل ذلك لأبي
بكر و لا لعمر و لا قريها واحد منها بل هذا من الأكاذيب

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said before his (‘Alī’s) arrival, “I verily will give the flag to a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh and His Messenger too love him. Allāh will grant victory through his hands.” **The flag was never given before that to Abū Bakr or ‘Umar**, and neither of them even moved near it. **Rather, this (i.e. the claim that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar were given the flag before ‘Alī) is one of the lies.**³⁹¹

But, does that *really* help him or his two *khalīfahs*?

³⁹¹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minbāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 366

26 ḤADĪTH AL-ṬĀIR

INVESTIGATING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

حديث الطائر من المكذوبات الموضوعات عند أهل العلم

Ḥadīth al-Ṭāir is one of the fabricated lies in the opinion of the people of knowledge.³⁹²

Meanwhile, Imām Ibn Asākir (d. 571 H) records:

أخبرنا أبو غالب بن البنا أنا أبو الحسين بن الأبنوسي أنا أبو الحسن البارقطني نا
محمد بن مخلد بن حفص نا حاتم بن الليث نا عبيد الله بن موسى عن عيسى بن
عمر القارئ عن السدي نا أنس بن مالك قال أهدني إلى رسول الله صلى الله
عليه وسلم أطيّار فقسّمها وترك طيرا فقال اللهم ائتني بأحب خلقك إليك يا كل
معي من هذا الطير فجاء علي بن أبي طالب فدخل يا كل معه من ذلك الطير

Abū Ghālīb b. al-Banā – Abū al-Husayn b. al-Abnūsī – Abū al-Ḥasan
al-Dāraquṭnī – Muḥammad b. Mukhlid b. Ḥafṣ – Ḥātim b. al-Layth –
‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā – ‘Īsā b. ‘Umar al-Qārī – al-Suddī – Anas b.
Mālik:

³⁹² Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 371

Birds were given as gifts to the Messenger of Allāh. So, he distributed them and left a bird. Then he said, “O Allāh, bring to me **the most beloved to You of Your creation** to eat with me from this bird. So, **‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib came** and entered and ate with him from that bird.³⁹³

Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) states about the first narrator:

أبو غالب ابن البناء الشيخ الصالح الثقة، مسند بغداد، أبو غالب أحمد بن الإمام
أي علي الحسن بن أحمد بن عبد الله بن البناء البغدادي الحنبلي.

Abū Ghālīb b. al-Banā: The righteous Shaykh, **the *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrator, the *ḥadīth* transmitter of Baghdad**, Abū Ghālīb Aḥmad b. Imām Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Banā al-Baghdādī al-Ḥanbalī.³⁹⁴

Concerning the second narrator, he further says:

ابن الابنوسي الشيخ الثقة، أبو الحسين، محمد بن أحمد بن محمد بن علي، ابن
الابنوسي البغدادي.

Ibn al-Abnūsī: **The *thiqah* (trustworthy) Shaykh**, Abū al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, Ibn al-Abnūsī al-Baghdādī.³⁹⁵

The third narrator, Imām al-Dāraqūṭnī, needs no introduction. Nonetheless, let us get al-Dhahabī’s words about him anyway:

الدارقطني: الامام الحافظ المجود، شيخ الاسلام، علم الجهادة، أبو الحسن، علي
بن عمر بن أحمد بن مهدي بن مسعود بن النعمان بن دينار بن عبد الله البغدادي
المقرئ المحدث

³⁹³ Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Habat Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh, Ibn Asākir al-Shāfi‘ī, *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1415 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Shīrī], vol. 42, p. 254

³⁹⁴ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar A’lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1413 H) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūtī], vol. 19, p. 603, # 352

³⁹⁵ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar A’lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1413 H) [annotators of the eighteenth volume: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūtī and Muḥammad Na‘īm al-Arqīsūsī], vol. 18, p. 85, # 38

Al-Dāraqutnī: **The Imām, the excellent *ḥāfiẓ* (*ḥadīth* scientist), Shaykh al-Islām**, the signpost of the pundits, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Aḥmad b. Maḥdī b. Mas’ūd b. al-Nu’mān b. Dīnār b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Baghdādī al-Maqrī, **the *ḥadīth* expert.**³⁹⁶

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) says about the fourth narrator:

محمد بن مخلد بن حفص ... وهو ثقة ثقة مشهور

Muḥammad b. Muhklid b. Ḥafṣ ... **He is *thiqah* (trustworthy), *thiqah* (trustworthy), *thiqah* (trustworthy), well-known.**³⁹⁷

Imām al-Dhahabī tells us about the fifth narrator as well:

حاتم بن الليث الحافظ المكثر الثقة، أبو الفضل، البغدادي الجوهري.

Hātim b. al-Layth: The *ḥadīth* scientist, the prolific *ḥadīth* narrator, **the *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrator**, Abū al-Faḍl, al-Baghdādī, al-Jawharī.³⁹⁸

Al-Ḥāfiẓ returns to inform us about the sixth narrator:

عبيد الله بن موسى بن أبي المختار باذام العبسي الكوفي أبو محمد ثقة كان يتشيع

‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā b. Abī al-Mukhtār al-‘Ubsī al-Kūfī, Abū Muḥammad: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy)**, he was a Shī‘ī.³⁹⁹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ proceeds about the seventh narrator too:

³⁹⁶ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1413 H) [annotators of the sixteenth volume: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ and Akram al-Būshī], vol. 16, p. 449, # 332

³⁹⁷ Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān* (Beirut: Manshūrāt Muasassat al-‘A’lamī li al-Maṭbū’āt; 2nd edition, 1390 H), vol. 5, p. 374, # 1218

³⁹⁸ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 4th edition, 1406 H) [annotators of the twelfth volume: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ and Ṣāliḥ al-Samar], vol. 12, p. 519, # 195

³⁹⁹ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 640, # 4361

عيسى بن عمر الأسدي الهمداني بسكون الميم أبو عمر الكوفي القارئ ثقة

Ṭisā b. ‘Umar al-Asadī al-Hamdānī, Abū ‘Umar al-Kūfī al-Qārī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy)⁴⁰⁰

Finally, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) grades the last narrator, al-Suddī:

وهذا سند حسن، رجاله ثقات غير السدي وهو إسماعيل بن عبد الرحمن وهو صدوق بهم. كما في "التقريب".

This chain is ḥasan. Its narrators are trustworthy apart from al-Suddī, and he is Ismā‘īl b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman. **He was ṣadūq (very truthful),** and he hallucinated, as stated in *al-Taqrīb*.⁴⁰¹

He adds about him:

وهو ثقة احتج به مسلم واسمه إسماعيل بن عبد الرحمن.

He is thiqah (trustworthy). (Imām) Muslim has relied upon him as a ḥujjah (in his Ṣaḥīḥ), and his name is Ismā‘īl b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman.⁴⁰²

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ also states:

إسناده حسن لأجل السدي - وهو إسماعيل بن عبد الرحمن بن أبي كريمة - وباقي رجاله ثقات

Its chain is ḥasan due to al-Suddī – and he is Ismā‘īl b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abī Karīmah – and the other narrators are trustworthy.⁴⁰³

Shaykh Dr. Asad has the same grading for him:

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 773, # 5330

⁴⁰¹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqḥihāh wa Fawāidihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma‘ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī‘; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 1, p. 802, # 440

⁴⁰² *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 622, # 311

⁴⁰³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 3, p. 217, # 13301

حدثنا أبو همام حدثنا أبي عن زياد بن خيثمة عن إسماعيل السدي عن عكرمة عن
ابن عباس ... إسناده حسن

Abū Hammām – my father – Ziyād b. Khaythamah – **Ismā’īl al-Suddī** – Ikrimah – Ibn ‘Abbās **Its chain is *ḥasan***.⁴⁰⁴

Shaykh Dr. Al-A’zamī is not left out either:

حدثنا علي بن شعيب حدثنا أبو النضر حدثنا الأشجعي عن سفيان عن السدي
عن الهبي عن عائشة إسناده حسن

‘Alī b. Shu’ayb – Abū al-Naḍar – al-Ashja’ – Sufyān – **al-Suddī** – al-Bahī – ‘Āishah **Its chain is *ḥasan***.⁴⁰⁵

Interestingly, Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 H) has documented a similar report of *Ḥadīth al-Ṭāir* as Imām Ibn Asākir:

قال المؤلف وقد انبأنا ابو القاسم الحريري قال انبأنا ابو طالب العشري قال انا
الدارقطني قالنا انا محمد بن مخلد قال انا حاتم بن الليث قال انا عبيد الله بن موسى
عن عيسى بن عمر القاري عن السدي قال انس اهدي رسول الله صلى الله عليه
و سلم اطيّار فقسمن فقال اللهم ائتني بأحب خلقك اليك يا كل معي من هذا
الطير فجاء علي بن ابي طالب فدخل فاكل معه من ذلك الطير

Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī – Abū Ṭālib al-‘Ashrī – al-Dāraqūṭnī – Muḥammad b. Mukhlid – Ḥātim b. al-Layth – ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā – ‘Īsā b. ‘Umar al-Qārī – al-Suddī – Anas:

Birds were given as gifts to the Messenger of Allāh. So, he distributed them. Then he said, “O Allāh, bring to me **the most beloved to You of Your creation** to eat with me from this bird. **So, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib**

⁴⁰⁴ Abū Ya’lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 4, p. 396, # 2518

⁴⁰⁵ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muhammad Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī], vol. 3, p. 270, # 2049

came and entered and ate with him from that bird.⁴⁰⁶

This chain is basically the same as that which we have verified above in this chapter. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī also has this comment about this report:

فقد رواه ابن الجوزي (363) بإسناده من طريق الدارقطني: نا محمد بن مخلد: نا حاتم بن الليث قال: نا عبيد الله بن موسى به.

وهذا إسناد رجاله كلهم ثقات، إلا ما في (السدي) من الخلاف - وهو (السدي الكبير) ، واسمه: إسماعيل بن عبد الرحمن

Ibn al-Jawzī (363) has recorded it with his chain from the route of al-Dāraqutnī – Muḥammad b. Mukhlid – Ḥātim b. al-Layth – ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Mūsā with it (i.e. the full chain with the *ḥadīth*).

All the narrators of this chain are trustworthy, except for the difference of opinions concerning al-Suddī, and he is al-Suddī al-Kabīr, and his name is Ismā‘īl b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman.⁴⁰⁷

Since al-Suddī too is *thiqab* (trustworthy), or at least *ṣadūq* (very truthful) due to the disputes about him, the *sanad* is therefore either *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan*. We go with the stricter ruling. As such, we declare that chain of the *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan* due to al-Suddī. All its narrators are reliable, and there is no disconnection whatsoever in the *sanad*.

Meanwhile, the *ḥadīth* itself is absolutely *ṣaḥīḥ* due to the existence of massive, overwhelming corroboration (*mutaba‘āt*) for al-Suddī. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H), for instance, declares about *Ḥadīth al-Tāir*:

وقد رواه عن أنس جماعة من أصحابه زيادة على ثلاثين نفسا

It has been narrated from Anas by a group of his companions,

⁴⁰⁶ ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Alī b. al-Jawzī, *al-‘Ilal al-Mutanāhiyyah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Waḥīyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1403 H) [annotator: Khalīl al-Mays], vol. 1, p. 230, # 363

⁴⁰⁷ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqihāh wa Fawāidihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma‘ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī‘; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 14, p. 174, # 6575

numbering **more than thirty** individuals.⁴⁰⁸

This establishes the *tawātur* of the *ḥadīth* from Anas, and shoots the report of al-Suddī from the level of *ḥasan* to the highest *ṣaḥīḥ* grade.

⁴⁰⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 141, # 4650

27 ḤADĪTH AL-ṬĀIR

EXAMINING SOME *SHAWĀHID*

The *ḥadīth* proves that Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, is the most beloved of all creatures to Allāh after His Messenger, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ālihi*. This goes directly counter to the claims of the majority of the Ahl al-Sunnah that Abū Bakr, after the Prophet, is the most beloved to Allāh in this Ummah. Therefore, a lot of their *‘ulamā* struggle hard to bring down *Ḥadīth al-Ṭāir* in order to salvage their sect from collapse or confusion. So, they bring up a lot of “ifs” and “maybes” without ever presenting any explicit, *positive* evidence for their claims. Meanwhile, apart from the *ḥadīth*, there are numerous other proofs which nullify the Sunnī position. Let us have a look at some of them.

We start with the Verse of *al-Mubāhala*:

فَمَنْ حَاجَكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

And whoever disputes with you concerning him after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: “Come, let us call *our* sons and your sons, *our* women and your women, *ourselves* and yourselves, then we place the Curse of Allāh upon the liars.”⁴⁰⁹

It is clear from the verse that some people were debating with the Prophet,

⁴⁰⁹ Qur’ān 3:61

opposing what had been revealed to him from his Lord. The Qur’ān is explicit: the debate was with the Messenger of Allāh *alone*. It was not with the Ummah. The “yous” in the verse, as well as the phrase “say”, are all singular. Therefore, all the “ours” in it are exclusive to the Prophet. “Our sons”, for instance, do not mean the “sons of the Ummah”. Rather, they were *his* sons. His opponents were refusing to accept the Truth which he had brought from his Lord. So, he was commanded to challenge them to a *mubāhala*, where each side would invoke the Curse of Allāh upon “whoever” was lying in his claims between the two sides. A condition of the *mubāhala* was that each party must participate in it with his sons and women. As such, the effect of the curse would affect the wrong disputant along with his sons and women.

The question is – why did the Qur’ān name the “sons” and “women” as compulsory participants? The reason is apparent. A man usually cares most for himself, his sons, his daughters and his wives. He would not want any harm to come their way. Therefore, if he must involve himself *and* them together in a *mubāhala*, he is most likely to think twice, and to withdraw from it if he has the slightest doubt in his claims. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) agrees:

والنفوس تحنوا على أقاربها مالا تحنوا على غيرهم وكانوا يعلمون انه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ويعلمون ان باهلوهم نزلت البهالة عليهم وعلى أقاربهم واجتمع خوفهم على أنفسهم وعلى أقاربهم فكان ذلك أبلغ في امتناعهم وإلا فالإنسان قد يختار أن يهلك ويحيا ابنه والشيخ الكبير قد يختار الموت إذا بقي أقاربه في نعمة ومال وهذا موجود كثير

The hearts (lit: the souls) care for their closest people what they do not care for others. They (the non-Muslim disputants) knew that he was the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, and they knew that if they did *mubāhala* with him, curse would descend upon them and upon their closest people. So, their fear over themselves became combined with their fear over their closest people. This caused their withdrawal (from the *mubāhala*). Otherwise, the human being prefers to lose his life in order to save his son from death (if the need arises). Moreover, the old man prefers death if his closest people will be in comfort and wealth. And this is very common.⁴¹⁰

⁴¹⁰ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 126

In simple words, each party in the *mubāhala* was to involve in it the people *closest* to his heart, those people whom he cared most for. So, who were the *closest* persons to the heart of the Messenger of Allāh during his lifetime? This is where trouble sets in for our dear Shaykh:

فَعَلِمَ أَنَّهُ أَرَادَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ إِلَيْنَا مِنَ الذَّكُورِ وَالْإِنَاثِ مِنَ الْأَوْلَادِ وَالْعَصْبَةِ
وَلِهَذَا دَعَا الْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ مِنَ الْأَبْنَاءِ وَدَعَا فَاطِمَةَ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَدَعَا عَلِيًّا مِنْ رِجَالِهِ
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ عِنْدَهُ أَحَدٌ أَقْرَبَ إِلَيْهِ نَسَبًا مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ وَهُمْ الَّذِينَ أَدَارَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْكِسَاءَ
وَالْمُبَاهَلَةَ إِنَّمَا تَحْصُلُ بِالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَّا فَلَوْ بِأَهْلِهِمُ بِالْأَبْعَدِينَ فِي النَّسَبِ وَإِنْ كَانُوا
أَفْضَلَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ لَمْ يَحْصُلِ الْمَقْصُودُ فَإِنَّ الْمُرَادَ أَنَّهُمْ يَدْعُونَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ كَمَا يَدْعُوا هُوَ
الْأَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ

Know that He (Allāh in the Verse of *al-Mubāhala*) intended the closest people to us - males and females – from the children and the blood relatives. **This was why he called al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn from the sons and called Fāṭimah from the women and called ‘Alī from his men. There was no one else who was closer to him, in terms of blood relationship, than these people.** They were those over whom he spread the *kisā* (cloak), **AND THE MUBĀHALA WOULD ONLY SUCCEED THROUGH THE CLOSEST OF PEOPLE TO HIM.** Otherwise, if they (both parties) had done it with their distant blood relatives, even if such had been superior in the Sight of Allāh, its purpose would have been defeated. **This was because the intention was that they (the non-Muslim party) should call their closest people, as he (Muḥammad) should also call the closest people to him.**⁴¹¹

So, ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, *‘alaibim al-salām*, were the closest people to the Prophet’s heart. He cared for them more than he did for anyone else on the face of the earth. At the practical level, the Messenger of Allāh, for instance, cared more for ‘Alī than he did for Abū Bakr and ‘Umar! He equally cared more for *Umm Abībā* Fāṭimah than he did for Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah. If this had not been the case, then the *mubāhala* challenge would have been worthless, as the non-Muslim opponents were directed to summon people closest to their hearts. For a proper *mubāhala*, things had to be equal on both sides.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid*, vol. 7, p. 125

Our Shaykh asserts that the Messenger's care for 'Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn was based upon their blood relationship to him. He however misses the fact that al-'Abbās was legally a *closer* blood relative to the Prophet than 'Alī! This is why the right of the uncle to inherit overrules that of the cousin, as Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) states:

ولا خلاف بين أهل العلم إن ابن العم لا يرث مع العم

There is no difference of opinion among the scholars that the cousin cannot inherit with the presence of the uncle.⁴¹²

Therefore, if the Prophet was choosing people on the basis of their blood closeness to him, he would have picked al-'Abbās – who was already a practising Muslim then – and not 'Alī. Alternatively, he could have selected both al-'Abbās and 'Alī, and possibly some other cousins like Ibn 'Abbās. Sensing the frailty of his own submission, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah attempts to apply some cosmetics to it:

وآية المباهلة نزلت سنة عشر لما قدم وفد نجران ولم يكن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قد بقي من أعمامه إلا العباس والعباس لم يكن من السابقين الأولين ولا كان له به اختصاص كعلي و أما بنو عمه فلم يكن فيهم مثل علي وكان جعفر قد قتل قبل ذلك

The Verse of *al-Mubāhala* was revealed in 10 AH when the delegation of Najrān arrived. The Prophet, peace be upon him, had no other uncle other than al-'Abbās then, and al-'Abbās was not among the early converts to Islām, and did not have the exclusive qualities of 'Alī. As for his (i.e. the Prophet's) cousins, none of them was like 'Alī, and Ja'far had been killed before then.⁴¹³

Here, our Shaykh contradicts his other position. Was the choice of the Prophet for the participants in the *mubāhala* from his side based solely upon their blood relationship to him or upon their individual merits? A question also arises as to why 'Āishah and all other wives of the Prophet were

⁴¹² Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 136, # 4634

⁴¹³ Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 7, p. 126

excluded. After all, the word used in the Verse of *al-Mubāhala* is *nisā*, which literally means “women”. As such, it covered *both* wives and daughters. In fact, everywhere else in the Qur’ān, the phrase “women (*nisā*) of the Prophet” *always* referred to his wives⁴¹⁴! In addition, in over 90% of cases, the word “women (*nisā*)” in the Book of Allāh means “wives”⁴¹⁵. So, it is safe to conclude that the phrase “our women” in the Verse of *al-Mubāhala* is addressed *first* to the wives, and *then* to the daughters. Our Sunnī brothers have never been able to explain why the wives were not called to join in the *mubāhala*.

In any case, none of the wives of the Prophet – and they were also his primary “women” - was from his closest blood relatives. That would have been incest anyway, and therefore impossible. The fact that the word “women” has been used in the verse, and not “daughters”, strengthens the theory that the selection process was NOT based upon blood relationship. Allāh Himself selected the people whom He knew to be the closest to the heart of His Messenger to participate with him in the *mubāhala*. He mentioned the categories to which they belonged, deliberately leaving them open *for a clear point*. Then the Prophet filled in the names. Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) declares:

وقد تواترت الاخبار في التفسير عن عبد الله بن عباس وغيره أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أخذ يوم المباهلة بيد علي وحسن وحسين وجعلوا فاطمة وراءهم ثم قال هؤلاء أبنائنا وأنفسنا نساؤنا فهللوا أنفسهم وأبنائكم ونساءكم ثم نبتهل فنجعل لعنة الله على الكاذبين

There have been *mutawātir* reports in the *tafsir* books from ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās and others that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, on the Day of *al-Mubāhala*, held the hands of ‘Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and they positioned Fāṭimah behind them. Then he said, “**These are our sons, ourselves and our women.** So, bring yourselves, your sons and your women. Then we do *mubāhala* and place the Curse of Allāh

⁴¹⁴ See for instance, Qur’ān 33:30, 33:32

⁴¹⁵ The word *nisā* (women) has been used in the following verses: 2:49, 2:187, 2:222-223, 2:226, 2:231-232, 2:235-236, 3:14, 3:42, 3:61, 4:1, 4:3-4, 4:7, 4:11, 4:15, 4:19, 4:22-24, 4:32, 4:34, 4:43, 4:75, 4:98, 4:127, 4:129, 4:176, 5:6, 7:81, 7:127, 7:141, 12:30, 12:50, 14:6, 24:31, 24:60, 27:55, 28:4, 33:30, 33:32, 33:52, 33:55, 33:59, 40:25, 48:25, 49:11, 58:2-3, 65:1 and 65:4.

upon the liars (among us).⁴¹⁶

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah corroborates him:

وأما آية الابتال ففي الصحيح أنها لما نزلت أخذ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بيد علي وفاطمة وحسن وحسين ليباهل بهم لكن خصهم بذلك لأنهم كانوا أقرب إليه من غيرهم فإنه لم يكن ولد ذكر إذ ذاك يمشي معه ولكن كان يقول عن الحسن إن ابني هذا سيد فهما ابناه ونساؤه إذ لم يكن قد بقي له بنت إلا فاطمة رضي الله عنها

As for the Verse of *al-Ibtibal* (another word for *al-Mubabala*), what is narrated in the **ṣaḥīḥ (ḥadīth)** is that when it was revealed, the Prophet, peace be upon him, held the hand of ‘**Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn** to do *mubabala* with them (against the Najrānīs). **However, he limited that to them because they were the closest of all people to him.** This was because he did not have a son who would have walked with him. However, he used to say about al-Ḥasan, “This son of mine is a master”. Therefore, both of them (i.e. al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn) were his sons. As for his women, he had no other surviving daughter except Fāṭimah, may Allāh be pleased with her.⁴¹⁷

Well, the Prophet had other “women”, such as ‘Āishah, Ḥafṣah, Umm Salamah, and several others. Why did he not call them?

No doubt, the people that the Messenger of Allāh cared most for were ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. Luckily, by Allāh’s Mercy, these people - who were the closest to his heart - fell into the same categories as what obtains in most similar cases. Therefore, it was possible to organize a *mubabala* with the Najrānī delegation on the same terms. There is a particular point on the word “ourselves”. It is represented by two people, namely the Prophet and Amīr al-Mūminīn, in the *mubabala*. The obvious implication of this is that the Messenger of Allāh cared of ‘Alī at the same level as he cared for himself. In other words, Imām ‘Alī was as close to the heart of the Prophet as the latter himself was to his own heart. This was

⁴¹⁶ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥāfiz al-Naysābūrī, *Kitāb Ma’rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* (Beirut: Manshūrāh Dār al-Āfāq al-Ḥadīth; 4th edition, 1400 H) [annotator: Sayyid Mu’zam Ḥusayn], p. 50

⁴¹⁷ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 4, p. 27

why it was possible for Amīr al-Mūminīn to fit into the same category as the Messenger in the *mubāhala*.

Of course, when someone is close to your heart and you care for them, that is love! So, the most beloved of mankind to the Prophet of Allāh were ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and this is confirmed by the Qur’ān. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah would have us believe that this love was based only upon blood relationship. However, Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا إسماعيل ثنا ليث عن عمرو بن مرة عن معاوية بن
سويد بن مقرن عن البراء بن عازب قال كنا جلوسا عند النبي صلى الله عليه و
سلم فقال ... ان أوسط عرى الإيمان ان تحب في الله وتبغض في الله

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Ismā’īl – Layth – ‘Amr b. Marrah – Mu’āwiyah b. Suwayd b. Muqarran – al-Barā b. ‘Āzim:

We were sitting with the Prophet, peace be upon him, and he said ...
“Verily, **the central handhold of faith (*īmān*) is that you love for the sake of Allāh** and that you hate for the sake of Allāh.”⁴¹⁸

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ says:

حديث حسن بشواهده

It is a *ḥadīth* that is *ḥasan* through its witnesses.⁴¹⁹

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) also records this *ḥadīth*:

إن أوثق عرى الإسلام: أن تحب في الله و تبغض في الله

Verily, **the strongest handhold of Islām is that you love for the sake of Allāh** and hate for the sake of Allāh.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muassasat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 4, p. 286, # 18547

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid*

⁴²⁰ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḡhir wa Ziyādātuhu* (Al-Maktab al-Islāmī), vol. 1, p. 342, # 883 (2009)

The ‘Allāmah states:

حسن

*Hasan*⁴²¹

Is there anyone with a better faith (*īmān*), or who is a better Muslim, than the Messenger of Allāh? Of course, there is none! Therefore, his love for ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn was purely *for the sake of Allāh*. They were the most beloved creatures to Allāh after His Messenger. So, he loved them too more than everyone else. Our Lord also loves Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib more than Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. As such, His Prophet loved ‘Alī as he loved himself. These facts were *very* widely known throughout the Islāmic world during the Messenger’s lifetime. Even non-Muslims were aware of the names of the most beloved human beings to Muḥammad. This was why the Najrānī delegation raised no objection whatsoever to anyone in the Prophet’s team for the *mubāhala*. They knew that those were the closest people to his heart, whom he cared for most, above everyone else. As such, they were the perfect and the only valid selection for the *mubāhala* from his side.

The Messenger was absolutely trustworthy. He never would have cheated. Since he expected the other side to involve their most beloved people in the *mubāhala* – in line with the rules of the game, he too would certainly have done like that. Moreover, if it had been known that there had been other people more beloved to him than his team, his own followers would have suspected the truth of his prophethood and his personal honesty. Otherwise, why would he need to cheat if he was correct in his claims? What would he have been afraid of? Besides, the Najrānī delegation too would have objected to his selection. They would have firmly demanded for an equal playing field. Since all parties were required to bring the most beloved of people to them into the *mubāhala*, why should the Prophet do otherwise? In fact, it was most probably what convinced them to opt out of the *mubāhala*. Muḥammad would *never* have involved his team in it – knowing the implications - unless he was absolutely truthful in his claims. The Najrānī delegation, on their part, never dared involve their own teams, since they had doubts about their submissions!

As expected, Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah was not happy about the state of things, and did challenge the Messenger of Allāh on it. Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H)

⁴²¹ *Ibid*

states:

وأخرج أحمد وأبو داود والنسائي بسند صحيح عن النعمان بن بشير قال استأذن أبو بكر على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فسمع صوت عائشة عاليا وهي تقول والله لقد علمت أن عليا أحب إليك من أبي

Aḥmad, Abū Dāwud and al-Nasāī have recorded **with a ṣaḥīḥ chain** from al-Nu’mān b. Bashīr:

Abū Bakr sought permission to enter the house of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and heard the voice of ‘Āishah, very loud, and she was saying (to the Prophet), **“I have known that ‘Alī is more beloved to you than my father.”**⁴²²

Imām Aḥmad also has this:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا أبو نعيم ثنا يونس ثنا العيزار بن حريث قال قال النعمان بن بشير قال استأذن أبو بكر على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فسمع صوت عائشة عاليا وهي تقول والله لقد عرفت أن عليا أحب إليك من أبي ومني مرتين أو ثلاثا فاستأذن أبو بكر فدخل فأهوى إليها فقال يا بنت فلانة ألا أسمعك ترفعين صوتك على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Abū Na’īm – Yūnus – al-‘Ayzār b. Ḥurayth – al-Nu’mān b. Bashīr:

Abū Bakr sought the permission of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, to enter his house, and heard the voice of ‘Āishah, very loud. She was saying, **“I swear by Allāh, I have discovered that ‘Alī is more beloved to you than my father and me.”** She said it twice or thrice. So, Abū Bakr sought permission (again) and entered, and reached for her, and said, “O daughter of such-and-such woman! Did I hear you raising your voice upon the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him?”⁴²³

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ says:

⁴²² Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah li al-Ṭabā’ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 7, p. 19

⁴²³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 4, p. 275, # 18444

Its chain is *ḥasan*.⁴²⁴

Apparently, the Prophet had tried to conceal the matter from her due to her notorious jealousy. But, it was too obvious, especially after the Incident of *al-Mubābala*. So, she went on the offensive, and never relented thereafter. Eventually, she commanded a very bloody armed insurrection against Amīr al-Mūminīn during his *ḫilāfah*, and thousands of Muslims died tragically as a result. It is very significant that the Messenger of Allāh did not deny her claim. If she was wrong, he would have told her.

Yet, despite that, Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah continued to re-write history after the death of the Messenger. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī reports her:

فقال الإمام أحمد (241/6): حدثنا عبد الواحد الحداد عن كهمس عن عبد الله بن شقيق، قال: قلت لعائشة: أي الناس كان أحب إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قالت: عائشة، قلت: فمن الرجال؟ قالت: أبوها."

Imām Aḥmad (6/241) records: ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Ḥadād – Kahmas – ‘Abd Allāh b. Shaqīq:

I said to ‘Āishah, “Which of mankind was the most beloved to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him?” ‘Āishah said, “‘Āishah”. I said, “What about among the men?” She replied, “Her father.”⁴²⁵

The ‘Allāmah states:

قلت: وهذا إسناد صحيح رجاله كلهم ثقات رجال الصحيح.

I say: **This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ***. Its narrators are trustworthy, narrators of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*.⁴²⁶

Is that not strange? Despite “knowing” and “discovering” what she did, she

⁴²⁴ *Ibid*

⁴²⁵ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍa‘īfah wa al-Mawḍū‘ah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fī al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 3, p. 254, # 1124

⁴²⁶ *Ibid*

still went ahead to claim this! Meanwhile, was she really the best of *mankind* after the Messenger of Allāh as she was telling people? Besides, why did the Prophet exclude her from the *mubāhala* despite that she was one of his “women”? Was ‘Āishah telling the people that the Messenger cheated?!!

28 ḤADĪTH AL-TA'RĪF

UNDERSTANDING ITS BACKGROUND

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

الحديث الذي روى عن ابن عمر ما كنا نعرف المنافقين على عهد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلا يبغضهم عليا فإن هذا مما يعلم كل عالم أنه كذب لأن النفاق له علامات كثيرة وأسباب متعددة غير بغض على فكيف لا يكون على النفاق علامة إلا بغض على

The *ḥadīth* which is narrated from Ibn 'Umar, "We were not able to recognize the hypocrites during the lifetime of the Prophet, peace be upon him, except through their hatred of 'Alī", **verily this is known to all scholars that it is a lie**. This is because hypocrisy has several signs and causes apart from hatred of 'Alī. So, how could the hatred of 'Alī have been the *only* sign of hypocrisy?⁴²⁷

Our Shaykh then proceeds:

لو قال كنا نعرف المنافقين ببغض على لكان متوجها كما أنهم أيضا يعرفون ببغض الأنصار بل وببغض أبي بكر وعمر وببغض هؤلاء فإن كل من أبغض من يعلم أن

⁴²⁷ Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 4, pp. 298-299

النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يحبه ويؤايله وأنه كان يحب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم
ويؤايله كان بغضه شعبة من شعب النفاق

If he had said “We used to recognize the hypocrites through their hatred of ‘Alī” then he would have been correct. They (the hypocrites) were also recognized through their hatred of the Anṣār, rather through the hatred of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, and through the hatred of these people. This is because everyone who hates anyone who is known to have been loved by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and who also loved the Prophet, peace be upon him, such hatred is a sign of hypocrisy.⁴²⁸

This was during the lifetime of the Prophet, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālihi*. Our Shaykh accepts that hatred of ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, was truly then a sign of hypocrisy. What he rejects is the possibility that hatred of Amīr al-Mūminīn was the *only* sign to recognize hypocrisy – something that is NOT claimed in the *ḥadīth* anyway! To him, the determining question is: did the Prophet love the person being hated? If the answer were positive, then such hatred was unmistakable evidence of hypocrisy. Under this principle, anyone who hated Amīr al-Mūminīn *during the lifetime of the Messenger* was certainly a hypocrite. Our Shaykh has no problem with that. But then, he further insists that the same rule applied in favour of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar too. It is his belief that the Prophet loved both of them more than Amīr al-Mūminīn. Therefore, hatred of either Abū Bakr or ‘Umar would be an even bigger form of hypocrisy.

What about events after the death of the Messenger? Was love or hatred of someone, by the Prophet *during his lifetime*, evidence of their permanent, *immutable* status? In simpler words, once an individual was able to earn the love of Allāh and His Messenger, was it *ever* possible for him to forfeit it? This question stands at the centre of our research in this chapter. The Qur’ān states categorically several times that *any* individual who has become Allāh’s beloved can also turn into His enemy *anytime*! For instance, Allāh says to all His prophets:

ولقد أوحى إليك وإلى الذين من قبلك لئن أشركت ليحبطن عملك ولتكونن من
الخاسرين

And indeed it has been revealed to you (O Muḥammad), as it was

⁴²⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 4, pp. 299-300

revealed to those before you: **if you commit idolatry, then surely all your deeds will be in vain**, and you will certainly be among the losers.⁴²⁹

The Qur'ān also states:

قل إني أخاف إن عصيت ربي عذاب يوم عظيم

Say: "I fear, **if I disobey my Lord**, the torment of a Mighty Day."⁴³⁰

Therefore, the love of Allāh for Muḥammad and all His promises of Paradise to him were conditioned upon his continued obedience and servitude to his Lord Alone. Should he have become otherwise during his lifetime, Allāh would have hated him and thrown him into Hellfire. As such, Muḥammad remained in constant fear of disobeying his Lord till his death. This was the case with the most beloved of all creation to Allāh. Apparently, the same condition applied indiscriminately to all the Ṣaḥābah, and to all beings till the Hour. So, even if any of them had earned the love of Allāh and His Prophet, the story did not end there. If he *ever* did certain acts, before or after the Messenger's death, he would forfeit such love.

Before proceeding further, we must ask whether the Messenger of Allāh, during his lifetime, loved 'Alī or not. Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) answers with this *ḥadīth*:

حدثنا قتيبة بن سعيد ومحمد بن عباد (وتقاربا في اللفظ) قالوا حدثنا حاتم (وهو ابن إسماعيل) عن بكير بن مسمار عن عامر بن سعد بن أبي وقاص عن أبيه قال أمر معاوية بن أبي سفيان سعدا فقال ما منعك أن تسب أبا التراب؟ فقال أما ذكرت ثلاثا قالهن له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فلن أسبه لأن تكون لي واحدة منهن أحب إلي من حمر النعم سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول له خلفه في بعض مغازيه فقال له علي يا رسول الله خلقتني مع النساء والصبيان؟ فقال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أما ترضى أن تكون مني بمنزلة هارون من موسى إلا أنه لا نبوة بعدي وسمعته يقول يوم خيبر لأعطين الراية رجلا يحب الله ورسوله ويحبه الله ورسوله قال فتناولنا لها فقال ادعوا لي عليا فأتى به أرمد فبصق في عينه ودفع الراية إليه ففتح الله عليه ولما نزلت هذه الآية قتل تعالوا ندع

⁴²⁹ Qur'ān 39:65

⁴³⁰ Qur'ān 6:15

أبناءنا وأبنائكم [٧٣/ عمران/ 61] دعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم عليا
وفاطمة وحسنا وحسينا فقال اللهم هؤلاء أهلي

Qutaybah b. Saʿīd and Muḥammad b. ʿIbād – Ḥātim b. Ismāʿīl –
Bukayr b. Musmār – ʿĀmir b. Saʿīd b. Abī Waqqāṣ – his father (Saʿd b.
Abī Waqqāṣ):

Muʿāwiyah commanded Saʿd, and therefore said, “What prevented you from cursing Abū al-Turāb (i.e. ‘Alī)?” So, he (Saʿd) replied, “As long as I remember three things which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said about him, I will never curse him. **If just one of them had been for me, it would have been dearer to me than a red camel.** I heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying to him. He made him his *khaliḥ* during one of his military expeditions. So, ‘Alī said to him, “O Messenger of Allāh, are you leaving me behind with women and children?” So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said to him, “Are you not pleased that you are to me of the status of Hārūn to Mūsā except that there is no prophethood after me?” And I heard him saying on the Day of Khaybar, “**I will give the flag to a man who loves Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh and His Messenger too love him.**” So, we longed for it (i.e. the flag). **Then he said, “Call ‘Alī for me”,** and he was brought to him. He was sore-eyed. He applied saliva to his eye and gave the flag to him, and Allāh granted him victory. And when this verse was revealed {Say: Come, let us call *our* sons and your sons....} [3/61], the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, called ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and said, “O Allāh! These are my family.”⁴³¹

There are three quick points from this *ḥadīth*, with specific reference to this chapter:

1. Muʿāwiyah commanded Saʿd to do something, *before* asking him why he (Saʿd) refused to curse ‘Alī.
2. Saʿd did not have *any* of those three merits mentioned for ‘Alī, and very strongly wished he did any of them.
3. Allāh and His Messenger loved ‘Alī, and he loved them too.

So, what did Muʿāwiyah command Saʿd to do? In order to uncover what

⁴³¹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-ʿArabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ʿAbd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 1870, # 2404 (32)

that was, we must pay attention to the former's question:

ما منعك أن تسب أبا التراب؟

What prevented you from cursing Abū al-Turāb (i.e. 'Alī)?

In classical Arabic, this sentence structure was used to ask why a direct order had been disobeyed, *by the commandant himself*. In other words, if A ordered B to, say, hit C, and B refused to do so, then A would say to B, "What prevented you from hitting C?" The other manner in which it was applied was where A did not command B to do something, but was nonetheless unpleasantly surprised or shocked that B had not done it. So A would ask, "What prevented you from doing such-and-such?"

An example is in this verse:

قال يا إبليس ما منعك أن تسجد لما خلقت بيدي أستكبرت أم كنت من العالين

He (Allāh) said, "**O Iblīs! What prevented you** from prostrating yourself to one whom I have created with Both My Hands?⁴³²

Another is here:

قال ما منعك ألا تسجد إذ أمرتك

He (Allāh) said, "**What prevented you (O Iblīs)** that you did not prostrate **when I commanded you** personally?"⁴³³

An example of the other use of that expression can be found here:

قال يا هارون ما منعك إذ رأيتهم ضلوا

He (Mūsā) said, "**O Hārūn! What prevented you** when you saw them going astray?"⁴³⁴

We know that the situation of Sa'd fell into the first category. There was an explicit order to do something. As such, from Mu'āwiyah's question, we

⁴³² Qur'ān 38:75

⁴³³ Qur'ān 7:12

⁴³⁴ Qur'ān 20:92

realize that he had ordered Sa’d to curse ‘Alī. Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah agrees:

وأما حديث سعد لما أمره معاوية بالسب فأبى فقال ما منعك أن تسب علي بن أبي طالب فقال ثلاث قالهن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فلن أسبه لأن يكون لي واحدة منهم أحب إلي من حمر النعم الحديث فهذا حديث صحيح رواه مسلم في صحيحه

As for the *ḥadīth* of Sa’d, when Mu’āwiyah commanded him to curse, and he refused, and he (Mu’āwiyah) therefore said, “What prevented you from cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib?”, and he replied, “There are three things that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said. So, I will never curse him. If just one of them had been for me, it would have been dearer to me than a red camel”, **this *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim has narrated it.**⁴³⁵

In simpler words, Mu’āwiyah ordered Sa’d to curse someone who was loved by the Messenger during his lifetime. So, one asks: did ‘Alī forfeit this love after the Prophet’s death, *before* Mu’āwiyah’s command to Sa’d? Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah even has some more news for us:

و معلوم أن الله قد جعل للصحابه مودة في قلب كل مسلم لا سيما الخلفاء رضي الله عنهم لا سيما أبو بكر و عمر فان عامة الصحابة و التابعين كانوا يودونها و كانوا خير القرون و لم يكن كذلك علي فان كثيرا من الصحابة و التابعين كانوا يبغضونه و يسبونونه و يقاتلونهم

What is known is that Allāh has certainly put the love of the Ṣaḥābah in the hearts of every Muslim, especially love of the *khulafāʾ*, may Allāh be pleased with them, especially love of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. This is because the generality of the Ṣaḥābah and Ṭābiʿīn loved them both, and **they (i.e. Ṣaḥābah and Ṭābiʿīn) were the best of generations. But, the matter was not the same for ‘Alī, for A LOT of the Ṣaḥābah and Ṭābiʿīn used to hate, curse and fight him.**⁴³⁶

The question is: why? Had ‘Alī had forfeited the love of Allāh and His Messenger for him? Had he become worthy of hatred, curses and armed

⁴³⁵ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 5, p. 42

⁴³⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 7, pp. 137-138

hostility? This is the big test for our Sunnī brothers. If ‘Alī had not forfeited the love of Allāh and His Messenger for himself, then those Ṣaḥābah and Tābiʿīn who hated, cursed or fought him had forfeited their own, if any! Allāh has said:

والله لا يحب الظالمين

And Allāh does NOT love the unjust people.⁴³⁷

It all boils down to whether those Ṣaḥābah and Tābiʿīn treated ‘Alī justly by hating, cursing and fighting him. If they had NOT done so, then they all forfeited Allāh’s prior love for them with those unjust actions. In line with our Shaykh’s words, they also turned hypocrites:

فإن كل من أبغض من يعلم أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يحبه ويواليه وأنه كان
يحب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ويواليه كان بغضه شعبة من شعب النفاق

This is because *everyone* who hates *anyone* who is known to have been loved by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and who also loved the Prophet, peace be upon him, such hatred is a sign of hypocrisy.⁴³⁸

The Sunnī dilemma explodes here. Their theology is based on a rigid theory that all the Ṣaḥābah earned Allāh’s love and *never* forfeited it. How do they treat the case of those of them who hated, cursed and fought ‘Alī - like Muʾāwiyah and Umm al-Mūminīn ‘Āishah? Our Sunnī brothers want to eat the cake, and still have it! To them, those Ṣaḥābah were not unjust people, and therefore never forfeited Allāh’s love for them. Does this mean that ‘Alī truly deserved their hatred, curses and armed hostility? Sunnī Islām says “no” again. ‘Alī remained a loyal, beloved friend of Allāh throughout his lifetime, and never deserved anyone’s hatred, curse or hostility!

The matter takes a new dimension with this *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, copied by ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H):

من أحب عليا فقد أحبني ومن أحبني فقد أحب الله عز وجل ومن أبغض عليا

⁴³⁷ Qur’ān 3: 57

⁴³⁸ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 4, p. 300

فقد أبغضني ومن أبغضني فقد أبغض الله عز وجل.

Whosoever loves ‘Alī has loved me. And whosoever loves me has loved Allāh the Almighty. **Moreover, whosoever hates ‘Alī has hated me. And whosoever hates me has hated Allāh the Almighty.**⁴³⁹

The ‘Allāmah comments:

رواه المخلص في " الفوائد المنتقاة " (10 / 5 / 1) بسند صحيح عن أم سلمة قالت: أشهد أني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: فذكره.

Al-Mukhlis recorded it in *al-Fawā'id al-Muntaqāt* (10/5/1) **with a ṣaḥīḥ chain** from Umm Salamah, she said: "I testify that I heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying:" and he (al-Mukhlis) mentioned it (i.e. the *ḥadīth*).⁴⁴⁰

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) also records:

أخبرني أحمد بن عثمان بن يحيى المقرئ ببغداد ثنا أبو بكر بن أبي العوام الرياحي ثنا أبو زيد سعيد بن أوس الأنصاري ثنا عوف بن أبي عثمان النهدي قال قال رجل لسلام ما أشد حبك لعلي قال : سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : من أحب عليا فقد أحبني ومن أبغض عليا فقد أبغضني

Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān b. Yaḥyā al-Maqrī – Abū Bakr b. Abī al-‘Awwām al-Rayāḥī – Abū Zayd Saʿīd b. Aws al-Anṣārī – ‘Awf b. Abī ‘Uthmān al-Hindī:

A man said to Salmān (al-Fārisī), "What do you love ‘Alī severely like that?" He replied, "I heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying: 'Whosoever loves ‘Alī has loved me **and whosoever**

⁴³⁹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shuybun min Fiqḥihāh wa Fawā'idihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Maʿārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 3, pp. 287-288, # 1299

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 3, p. 288, # 1299

hates ‘Alī has hated me.’”⁴⁴¹

Al-Ḥākim says:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁴⁴²

Al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) concurs:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.⁴⁴³

The game changes here completely. Allāh made the love of ‘Alī an umbilical part of His Own love. He equally made the hatred of ‘Alī like that. This grand merit was exclusive to ‘Alī alone among all the Ṣaḥābah. A few points can be gleaned from it:

1. Allāh would *never* hate ‘Alī, because doing so would mean hating Himself and His Messenger.
2. Therefore, Allāh – in His infinite wisdom, justice and mercy – would always protect ‘Alī from doing anything that could harm His love for him, just as He did with His Prophet.
3. There can be no excuse or justification *ever* for hating ‘Alī – not even ignorance or mistake – just as there can be none for hating Allāh or His Messenger. The love of Allāh, His Messenger and ‘Alī is one, and so is their hatred.
4. Whosoever hates ‘Alī – whether by the heart, or by words, or by deeds – is guilty of hating Allāh and His Messenger. As such, all the Ṣaḥābah who hated, cursed or fought ‘Alī hated Allāh and His Messenger – no matter what the Sunnīs believe or say.

This is the point. The Ṣaḥābah, like the rest of the Ummah, earned, lost, re-gained, re-lost, etc Allāh’s love as well, depending on their current actions. This was the case even during the Prophet’s lifetime. Imām Aḥmad (d. 241

⁴⁴¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 141, # 4648

⁴⁴² *Ibid*

⁴⁴³ *Ibid*

H) records about the case of Buraydah, a prominent Ṣaḥābī:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن سعيد ثنا عبد الجليل قال انتهيت إلى حلقة فيها أبو مجلز وابن بريدة فقال عبد الله بن بريدة حدثني أبي بريدة قال: أبغضت عليا بغضا لم يبغضه أحد قط وقال أتبغض عليا قال قلت نعم قال فلا تبغضه وان كنت تحبه فازدد له حبا فما كان من الناس أحد بعد قول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أحب إلى من علي

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd – ‘Abd al-Jalīl – Abd Allāh b. Buraydah – my father, Buraydah:

I hated ‘Alī with a hatred that I never hated anyone else.... And he (the Prophet) said (to me), “Do you hate ‘Alī?” I said, “Yes”. He said, “Do not hate him, and if you love him, then increase your love for him”.... Therefore, **after the statement of the Messenger of Allāh**, peace be upon him, **there was no person among all mankind who was more beloved to me than ‘Alī.**⁴⁴⁴

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ says:

حديث صحيح وهذا إسناد حسن من أجل عبد الجليل

It is a *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*, and this chain is *ḥasan* due to ‘Abd al-Jalīl.⁴⁴⁵

Buraydah was an extreme hater of Allāh and His Messenger. At that point, he certainly had lost Allāh’s love for him. However, when the Prophet advised him, and he obeyed, he re-earned Allāh’s love once more. During his anti-‘Alī days, whoever hated him was NOT a hypocrite. In fact, it could be praiseworthy to hate him then. Meanwhile, the moment he loved ‘Alī above everyone else except the Messenger of Allāh, it became *ḥaram* to hate him. The bottomline is: the Ṣaḥābah – like everyone else – fluctuated between love and hatred of Allāh and His Messenger, depending upon their current actions. So, it may be compulsory to love them at one point, and *ḥarām* to do so at another. As such, love or hatred of any of them was not (and is not) a failproof measure to determine anyone’s hypocrisy. The only exception among them was ‘Alī. He stayed *permanently* within Allāh’s love,

⁴⁴⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shuʿayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 5, p. 350, # 23017

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid*

and was protected by Him from *ever* losing it, till his death. Therefore, hatred of him – like that of the Prophet - *always* produces the same result anytime anywhere. It was, and still is – after that of the Messenger - the best bet to unearth the hypocrites.

29 ḤADĪTH AL-TA'RĪF

PROVING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H) records:

حدثنا عبد الله قال حدثني أبي قتنا اسود بن عامر قتنا إسرائيل عن الأعمش عن
أبي صالح عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال : إنما كنا نعرف منافقي الأنصار ببغضهم عليا

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Aswad b.
‘Āmir – Isrā’īl – al-A’mash – Abū Ṣāliḥ – Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī:

We were able to recognize the hypocrites among the Anṣār only
through their hatred of ‘Alī.⁴⁴⁶

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) says about the first narrator:

عبد الله بن أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل الشيباني أبو عبد الرحمن ولد الإمام ثقة

‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, Abū ‘Abd
al-Raḥman: son of the Imām, **thiqah** (trustworthy).⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁶ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Faḍāil al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 1st edition, 1403 H) [annotator: Dr. Waṣīyullāh Muḥammad ‘Abbās], vol. 2, p. 579, # 979

⁴⁴⁷ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 477, # 3216

Of course, Imām Aḥmad needs no introduction. But, let's get the verdict of al-Ḥāfiẓ anyway:

أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل بن هلال بن أسد الشيباني المروزي نزيل بغداد أبو عبد الله
أحد الأئمة ثقة حافظ فقيه حجة

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal b. Hilāl b. Asad al-Shaybānī al-Marūzī, a Baghdād resident, Abū ‘Abd Allāh: One of the Imāms, **thiqah** (trustworthy), *ḥāfiẓ*, jurist, *hujjah* (an authority).⁴⁴⁸

Concerning the third narrator, al-Ḥāfiẓ says:

الأسود بن عامر الشامي نزيل بغداد يكنى أبا عبد الرحمن ويلقب شاذان ثقة

Al-Aswad b. ‘Āmir al-Shāmī, he lived in Baghdād, and was nicknamed Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥman and given the *laqab* Shādhān: **Thiqah** (trustworthy).⁴⁴⁹

The fourth narrator is like that as well, as stated by al-Ḥāfiẓ:

إسرائيل بن يونس بن أبي إسحاق السبيعي الهمداني أبو يوسف الكوفي ثقة تكلم
فيه بلا حجة

Isrāīl b. Yūnus b. Abī Ishāq al-Sabī‘ī al-Hamdānī, Abū Yūsuf al-Kūfī: **Thiqah** (trustworthy). He is criticized *without* evidence.⁴⁵⁰

Al-A’mash, the fifth narrator, is *thiqah* (trustworthy) too, according to al-Ḥāfiẓ:

سليمان بن مهران الأسدي الكاهلي أبو محمد الكوفي الأعشى ثقة حافظ عارف بالقراءات وورع
لكنه يدلّس

Sulaymān b. Mahrān al-Asadī al-Kāhili, Abū Muḥammad al-Kūfī al-A’mash: **Thiqah** (trustworthy), *ḥāfiẓ* (a *ḥadīth* scientist), a scholar of *al-qirāāt* (Qur’ānic recitation modes), pious. **However, he used to**

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 44, # 96

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 102, # 504

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 88, # 402

do *tadlīs*.⁴⁵¹

About the last narrator, al-Ḥāfiẓ has these words:

ذَكَوَانُ أَبُو صَالِحِ السَّهَّانِ الزِّيَاتِ الْمَدَنِيِّ ثِقَّةٌ ثَبَتَ

Dhakwān Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Samān al-Zayāt al-Madanī: *Thiqah* (trustworthy), *thabt* (accurate).⁴⁵²

All the narrators are therefore trustworthy, and the chain is well-connected. The only issue is that al-A’mash was a *mudallis*, and has narrated in an ‘*an-‘an*’ manner. So, does this affect the *ḥadīth*? The answer is a negative. Al-A’mash’s ‘*an-‘an*’ reports from Abū Ṣāliḥ are accepted by scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah. They apparently reject any notion that al-A’mash did *tadlīs* in his reports from Abū Ṣāliḥ, even in his ‘*an-‘an*’ reports. For instance, Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records this ‘*an-‘an*’ chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

وَحَدَّثَنِي زُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ

Zuhayr b. Ḥarb – Jarīr – al-A’mash – Abū Ṣāliḥ – Abū Hurayrah⁴⁵³

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H)⁴⁵⁴, Shaykh Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ⁴⁵⁵, Imām al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 H)⁴⁵⁶, Shaykh Dr. Asad⁴⁵⁷, and Shaykh Dr. Al-A’zamī⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 392, # 2623

⁴⁵² *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 287, # 1846

⁴⁵³ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 1764, # 2249 (14)

⁴⁵⁴ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdūrī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqḥihāh wa Fawāidihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 2, p. 39, # 512

⁴⁵⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muassasat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 2, p. 461, # 9943

⁴⁵⁶ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 2, p. 205, # 369

⁴⁵⁷ Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Dārimī, *Sunan* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī; 1st edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 2, p. 40, # 1771

have all also declared chains containing ‘*an-‘an*’ transmission by al-A’mash from Abū Ṣāliḥ to be *ṣaḥīḥ*. With this, it is obvious that the *ḥadīth* of Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī above, recorded by Imām Aḥmad, has a perfectly *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.

The *ḥadīth* establishes some very crucial points. The first is that there were hypocrites among the Anṣār. Of course, the Anṣār were Ṣaḥābah. Therefore, there were hypocrites among the Ṣaḥābah. Interestingly, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah agrees on this point too:

ولهذا قال احمد بن حنبل وغيره من العلماء انه لم يكن من المهاجرين من نفاق و إنما كان النفاق في قبائل الأنصار....

ولهذا إنما ذكر النفاق في السور المدنية وإما السور المكية فلا ذكر فيها للمنافقين

This is why Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and other scholars said that there was no hypocrite among the Muhājirūn **and that hypocrisy existed only within the tribes of the Anṣār....**

And this is why hypocrisy is mentioned only in the Madīnan *suwar* (chapters of the Qur’ān). As for the Makkan *suwar*, there is no mention in them of hypocrites.⁴⁵⁹

Well, in one of the earliest Makkan surah, Allāh does mention the existence of Muslims “in whose hearts is a disease” during the Makkan era⁴⁶⁰. Apparently, our Shaykh and the classical Sunnī scholars missed that crucial fact!

Whatever the case, the fact that hypocrites existed among the Anṣār – at the least - fatally undermines the Sunnī doctrine that all the Ṣaḥābah earned Allāh’s love, and that none of them ever forfeited it. Allāh does not love hypocrites. By contrast, He has cursed them:

⁴⁵⁸ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muhammad Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī], vol. 1, p. 358, # 725

⁴⁵⁹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 476

⁴⁶⁰ See Qur’ān 74:31

وعد الله المنافقين والمنافقات والكفار نار جهنم خالدين فيها هي حسبيم ولعنهم الله
ولهم عذاب مقيم

Allāh has promised the hypocrites, men and women, and the disbelievers, the Fire of *Jahannam*. They shall remain therein forever. It will be sufficient for them. **Allāh has also cursed them**, and for them is the lasting torment.⁴⁶¹

So, there were people cursed by Allāh, and who shall reside forever in *Jahannam*, among the Ṣaḥābah.

The second point in the *ḥadīth* is that the righteous Ṣaḥābah were unable to recognize the hypocritical Ṣaḥābah except through the latter’s hatred of ‘Alī. It is noteworthy that there is no claim whatsoever that hatred of Amīr al-Mūminīn was the *only* sign of hypocrisy. Rather, it was the most effective, the only failproof tool. All the other signs – such as lying, failure to fulfil promises, laziness during *Ṣalāt*, and so on – could be found in some people who were not hypocrites too, albeit in smaller quantities. However, as for hatred of ‘Alī, it is an *absolute* proof of hypocrisy. It is wholly impossible for a true believer to hate him in *any* circumstance, in line with the testimony of the Messenger of Allāh.

Imām Muslim records:

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا وكيع وأبو معاوية عن الأعمش ح وحدثنا يحيى
بن يحيى (واللفظ له) أخبرنا أبو معاوية عن الأعمش عن عدي بن ثابت عن زر
قال قال علي والذي فلق الحبة وبرأ النسمة إنه لعهد النبي الأبي صلى الله عليه و
سلم إلى أن لا يحبني إلا مؤمن ولا يبغضني إلا منافق

Abū Bakr b. Abī Shaybah – Wakī’ and Abū Mu’āwiyah – al-A’mash,
AND Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā – Abū Mu’āwiyah – al-A’mash – Adī b. Thābit –
Zirr:

‘Alī said: “I swear by the One Who split up the seed and created something living, the *Ummī* Prophet verily informed me that none loves me except a believer **and that none hates me except a**

⁴⁶¹ Qur’ān 9:68

hypocrite.”⁴⁶²

Imām Aḥmad also records his *mutāba’ah* for Ibn Abī Shaybah:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا وكيع ثنا الأعمش عن عدي بن ثابت عن زر بن
حبيش عن علي رضي الله عنه قال عهد إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه لا
يحبك إلا مؤمن ولا ييغضك إلا منافق

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Wakī’ – al-
A’mash – ‘Adī b. Thābit – Zirr b. Ḥubaysh – ‘Alī, may Allāh be
pleased with him:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, informed me saying, “None loves
you except a believer, **and none hates you except a hypocrite.**”⁴⁶³

Shaykh al-Arnāūṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs⁴⁶⁴

Imām al-Tirmidhī has also a third *mutāba’ah* for Wakī’:

حدثنا عيسى بن عثمان ابن أخي يحيى بن عيسى حدثنا أبو عيسى الرملي عن
الأعمش عن عدي بن ثابت عن زر بن حبيش عن علي قال لقد عهد إلى النبي
الأي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه لا يحبك إلا مؤمن ولا ييغضك إلا منافق

‘Īsā b. ‘Uthmān, son of the brother of Yaḥyā b. ‘Īsā – Abū ‘Īsā al-
Ramlī – al-Am’ash – ‘Adī b. Thābit – Zirr b. Ḥubaysh – ‘Alī:

The Ummī Prophet, peace be upon him, had informed me saying,
“None loves you except a believer **and none hates you except a**

⁴⁶² Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār
Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 1, p. 86, # 131 (78)

⁴⁶³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah)
[annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ], vol. 1, p. 128, # 1062

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid*

hypocrite.”⁴⁶⁵

Al-Tirmidhī states:

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*.⁴⁶⁶

‘Allāmah al-Albānī confirms:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 5, p. 643, # 3736

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid*

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid*

30 ḤADĪTH AL-TASHBĪH

ESTABLISHING ITS AUTHENTICITY

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

بل حملة على ذلك ممتنع لان أحدا لا يساوي رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم لا
عليه ولا غيره

Rather, interpreting it like that is impossible, because there is none who is equal to the Messenger of Allāh, neither ‘Alī nor any other person.⁴⁶⁸

We agree with our Shaykh that neither Abū Bakr nor ‘Umar was like, similar or equal to, the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālīhi*, in absolutely *any* way or form. However, it seems that the Shaykh has not properly understood the Shī‘ī position. We never claim *total* equality between the Prophet and the Amīr. What we profess, instead, is that ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, reached the level of the Messenger in *many* of his merits. In other words, in a lot of qualities, ranks and statuses, both the Prophet and the Amīr were, and are, *equal*. However, in all others, the Messenger of Allāh was, and is, infinitely superior to ‘Alī. Overall, the Prophet was, and is, the master, teacher and saviour of ‘Alī in both this world and the next.

⁴⁶⁸ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 7, p. 123

Imām al-Nasāī (d. 303 H) records an authentic *ḥadīth* that confirms just that:

أخبرنا العباس بن محمد قال حدثنا الأحوص بن جواب قال حدثنا يونس بن أبي إسحاق عن أبي إسحاق عن زيد بن يثيع عن أبي ذر قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليتبين بنو وليعة أو لأبعث إليهم رجلاً كنفسى ينفذ فيهم أمري فيقتل المقاتلة ويسبي الذرية فما راعني إلا وكف عمر في حجزتي من خلفي من يعني فقلت ما إياك يعني ولا صاحبك قال فمن يعني قلت خاصف النعل قال وعلي يخصف نعلاً

Al-‘Abbās b. Muḥammad – al-Aḥwaṣ b. Jawāb – Yūnus b. Abī Ishāq – Abū Ishāq – Zayd b. Yathī’ – Abū Dharr:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “If the Banū Walī’ah do not desist, I will appoint over them **a man who is exactly like myself** to implement my command among them. So, he will execute the combatants and take the offspring as war captives.”

I had not even moved when ‘Umar held my cloth and asked, “Who is he referring to?” I replied, “He is not referring to you or your companion (i.e. Abū Bakr).” He said, “In that case, who is he referring to?” So, I said, “(He is) referring to the one repairing the shoe.” And ‘Alī was repairing a shoe.⁴⁶⁹

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) says about this report:

قلت: وهذا إسناد رجاله ثقات؛ لكن أبا إسحاق - وهو السبيعي - مدلس، وكان اختلط، وابنه يونس روى عنه بعد اختلاطه.

I say: **This chain, all its narrators are trustworthy.** However, Abū Ishāq – and he is al-Sabī’ī – was a *mudalīs*, and he became confused, and his son Yūnus narrated from him after he had become confused.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb al-Nasāī, *Sunan al-Kubrā* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Dr. ‘Abd al-Ghaḥfār Sulaymān al-Bandārī and Sayyid Kasrawī Ḥasan], vol. 5, p. 127, # 8457

⁴⁷⁰ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍa‘īfah wa al-Mawḍū‘ah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fī al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Ma‘ārif; 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 10, p. 678, # 4960

So, all the narrators are trustworthy. However, Abū Ishāq was a *mudalis*, and has narrated in an ‘*an-‘an*’ manner. Moreover, his son, Yūnus, allegedly narrated from him only after he (Abū Ishāq) had become confused. These are ‘Allāmah al-Albānī’s only objections to the authenticity of the *ḥadīth*.

The arguments of our ‘Allāmah are a bit disappointing. While it is true that Abū Ishāq was a *mudalis*, his *tadlis* was largely of the harmless grade. Therefore, his ‘*an-‘an*’ reports are accepted without objection. Let us briefly examine how the *muḥadithūn* of the Ahl al-Sunnah have treated a well-known, strictly ‘*an-‘an*’ narration of Abū Ishāq. Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records:

حدثنا عبدالله بن مسلمة بن قعنب حدثنا معتمر بن سليمان عن أبيه عن رقية بن
مسقلة عن أبي إسحاق عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عباس عن أبي بن كعب قال
قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن الغلام الذي قتله الخضر طبع كافرا ولو
عاش لأرهبك أبويه طغيانا وكفرا

‘Abd Allāh b. Musalamah b. Qa’nab – Mu’tamir b. Sulaymān – his father – Raqabah b. Masqalah – **Abū Ishāq** – Sa’īd b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbās – Ubayy b. Ka’b:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “Verily, the boy killed by al-Khiḍr was created an unbeliever. If he had lived, he would have grieved his parents with his obstinate rebellion (against Allāh) and disbelief (in Allāh)”.⁴⁷¹

Abū Ishāq has narrated it ‘*an-‘an*’, and Imām Muslim has nonetheless accepted the *ḥadīth* as *ṣaḥīḥ*. Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H) has also included the same *riwāyah* with the same ‘*an-‘an*’ chain in his *Musnad*⁴⁷². Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ comments about it this way:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

⁴⁷¹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 2050, # 2661 (29)

⁴⁷² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 5, p. 118, # 21156

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁴⁷³

Imām al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 H) has equally documented it with Abū Ishāq’s ‘*an-‘an*’ narration⁴⁷⁴. Al-Tirmidhī says:

هذا حديث حسن صحيح غريب

This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb*.⁴⁷⁵

Interestingly, even ‘Allāmah al-Albānī accepts its authenticity:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁴⁷⁶

Elsewhere, the ‘Allāmah explains his decision:

ثنا محمد بن أبي بكر المقدمي ثنا معتمر بن سليمان عن أبيه عن رقية بن مسقلة عن أبي إسحاق عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عباس عن أبي بن كعب عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: الغلام الذي قتله الخضر طبع كافرا.

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين مع ما في النفس من عنعنة أبي إسحاق وهو عمرو ابن عبد الله السبيعي فإني لم أجد تصريحه بالتحديث في شيء من الروايات عنه مع أنه كان اختلط لكن لعل رقية بن مسقلة سمعه منه قبل الاختلاط فإنه قديم الوفاة فقد مات سنة 129 وهي السنة التي مات فيها أبو إسحاق نفسه فهو من أقرانه.

Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Muqaddamī – Mu’tamir b. Sulaymān – his father – Raqabah b. Masqalah – **Abū Ishāq** – Sa’īd b. Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbās – Ubayy b. Ka’b – the Prophet, peace be upon him:

“The boy killed by al-Khiḍr was created an unbeliever.”

⁴⁷³ *Ibid*

⁴⁷⁴ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-‘Urāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 5, p. 312, # 3150

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid*

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs, despite what is in the heart concerning its ‘*an-‘an*’ narration by Abū Ishāq, and his real name was ‘Amr b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Sabī’ī. **I have NOT found any explicit *taḥdīth* (i.e. non-‘*an-‘an*’ transmission) of it by him in the reports**, despite that he also became confused. However, maybe Raqabah b. Masqalah heard it from him before he became confused because he (Raqabah) died early (in history). His (i.e. Raqabah’s) death was in 129 H, and it was the year of Abū Ishāq’s death too. Therefore, they both were contemporaries.⁴⁷⁷

So, the ‘*an-‘an*’ report of Abū Ishāq is accepted as *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of both al-Bukhārī and Muslim by the leading *muhādithun* of the Ahl al-Sunnah, including ‘Allāmah al-Albānī himself. But then, al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) documents a rather interesting dissenting viewpoint concerning Abū Ishāq’s ‘*an-‘an*’ reports:

قال شعبة وكان أبو إسحاق إذا أخبرني عن رجل قلت له هذا أكبر منك فإن قال نعم علمت أنه لقي وإن قال أنا أكبر منه تركته.

Shu’bah said: “Whenever Abū Ishāq narrated to me in an ‘*an-‘an*’ form from any person, I used to say to him, ‘Is he older than you?’ If he answered, ‘Yes’, then I would know that he met (the narrator) [i.e. there was no *tadlīs* in the report]. But, if he said, ‘I am older than him’, I would abandon him.”⁴⁷⁸

In other words, Shu’bah assured us that *whenever* Abū Ishāq transmitted from people older than him, he never did *tadlīs*, even if he narrated in an ‘*an-‘an*’ manner from them. This is *very* crucial. Shu’bah was of an ultra-strict attitude towards Abū Ishāq’s *tadlīs*. So, he would not accept even the above *ḥadīth* of the boy, since Sa’īd b. Jubayr was far younger than Abū Ishāq⁴⁷⁹. Yet, despite this, *Ḥadīth al-Tashbīb* passes his ultra-strict standards and is covered by his expert assurance. Zayd b. Yathī’ was much older than Abū

⁴⁷⁷ Abū Bakr b. Abī ‘Āṣim, Ahmad b. ‘Amr b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Mukhlid al-Shaybānī, *Kitāb al-Sunnah* (al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1st edition, 1400 H) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 1, p. 86, # 194

⁴⁷⁸ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 8, p. 59, # 100

⁴⁷⁹ Sa’īd b. Jubayr was 49 years old when he was murdered by al-Ḥajjāj in 95 AH. See Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tabḍīb al-Tabḍīb* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 4, p. 12, # 14. As such, Sa’īd was born in 46 AH, decades after Abū Ishāq.

Ishāq. Al-Ḥāfiẓ states:

زيد بن يثيع ... الهمداني الكوفي ثقة مخضرم

Zayd b. Yathī’.... al-Ḥamadānī al-Kūfī: *Thiqah* (trustworthy). **He witnessed both the *Jāhiliyyah* and the Islāmic era.**⁴⁸⁰

Therefore, Zayd b. Yathī’ was born even before any verse of the Qur’ān was revealed! This means that he was even older than a lot of the Ṣaḥābah. Meanwhile, al-Ḥāfiẓ further records this about Abū Ishāq:

وعن أبي بكر بن عياش قال مات أبو إسحاق وهو ابن مائة سنة أو نحوها

Abū Bakr b. ‘Ayyāsh said: Abū Ishāq died while he was 100 years old or thereabout.⁴⁸¹

Since he died in 129 AH, that means he was born in 29 AH. As such, Zayd b. Yathī’ was decades older than him. Based upon the testimony of Shu’bah, the ‘*an-‘an* reports of Abū Ishāq from him were, without doubt, free from *tadlīs*. But, even if we ignored Shu’bah’s assurance, *Ḥadīth al-Tashbīb* would still pass through, considering the lenient attitude of Sunnī *muḥadithūn* to Abū Ishāq’s patently ‘*an-‘an* reports generally. With these facts, the first leg of ‘Allāmah al-Albānī’s criticism against *Ḥadīth al-Tashbīb* is cut off from its root completely.

The ‘Allāmah further asserts that Yūnus heard from his father, Abū Ishāq, only after the latter had become confused due to memory loss. The question is: where is the evidence? There is none! In fact, this submission of our ‘Allāmah is more farfetched statement than the other. Yūnus was largely contemporaneous with his father. He even met Anas, one of the senior Ṣaḥābah! Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) states about him:

يونس بن أبي إسحاق عمرو بن عبد الله الهمداني السبيعي الكوفي. عن أنس ... قلت: مات يونس سنة تسع وخمسين ومائة، وهو في عشر التسعين، إن لم يكن

⁴⁸⁰ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tahdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 332, # 2166

⁴⁸¹ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 8, p. 58, # 100

تجاوزها.

Yūnus b. Abī Ishāq ‘Amr b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Hamdānī al-Sabīṭ al-Kūfī:
He narrated from Anas ... I say: Yūnus died in 159 AH, and he was
 close to 90, if not older.⁴⁸²

So, when Abū Ishāq died in 129 AH, Yūnus was already about 60 years old. Does it make sense to claim that such a person narrated from Abū Ishāq only during the latter’s last days when his memory deteriorated?⁴⁸³ He even narrated from Anas who apparently died decades before his father!⁴⁸⁴ Al-Ḥāfiẓ tells us more why ‘Allāmah al-Albānī’s submission was completely out-of-touch with reality, while writing about Abū Ishāq:

وعنه ابنه يونس وابن ابنه إسرائيل بن يونس وابن ابنه الآخر يوسف بن إسحاق

His son (Yūnus) narrated from him, **as well as his grandson** Isrā’īl b. Yūnus and his other grandson Yūsuf b. Ishāq.⁴⁸⁵

If Yūnus could not hear any *aḥādīth* from his father until the latter’s last period on earth, when exactly did the grandsons take from Abū Ishāq? Obviously, Yūnus heard *aḥādīth* from Abū Ishāq long before the latter lost his memory. No wonder, Imām Ibn Khuzaymah has included a chain in which Yūnus has narrated *‘an-‘an* from Abū Ishāq, who in turn has also transmitted *‘an-‘an* from the Ṣaḥābī, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*⁴⁸⁶ while Shaykh Dr. al-A’zamī further declares that *sanad* to be *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁴⁸⁷ Shaykh Dr. Asad has

⁴⁸² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Miẓān al-Iṭidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah; 1st edition, 1382 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 4, pp. 482-483, # 9914

⁴⁸³ Abū Ishāq’s memory weakened only during the tail-end of his lifetime. See Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 739, # 5081

⁴⁸⁴ Abū al-Tufayl was the last of the Ṣaḥābah to die, and he died in 110 AH. See Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 464, # 3122

⁴⁸⁵ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tabdhīb al-Tabdhīb* (Dār al-Fikr; 1st edition, 1404 H), vol. 8, p. 57, # 100

⁴⁸⁶ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī], vol. 1, p. 326, # 647

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*

equally graded an exactly similar chain as *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁴⁸⁸ Meanwhile, Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ prefers to class an identical *sanad* only as *ḥasan*.⁴⁸⁹ Basically, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī has no valid objection to *Ḥadīth al-Tashbīḥ*. It has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain. The narration (including ‘*an-‘an*) of Yūnus from his father, Abū Ishāq, is *ṣaḥīḥ*. Furthermore, the ‘*an-‘an* transmission of Abū Ishāq from Zayd b. Yathī’ is equally of the perfectly *ṣaḥīḥ* grade, in any circumstance.

Ḥadīth al-Tashbīḥ, as narrated by Abū Dharr, is supported by this *shāhid* documented by Imām ‘Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211 H):

أخبرنا عبد الرزاق عن معمر عن ابن طاووس عن أبيه عن المطلب بن عبد الله بن حنطب قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لو قد ثقيف حين جاءوا: لتسلمن أو لنبعثن رجلا مني - أو قال: مثل نفسي فليضربن أعناقكم، وليسين ذرايكم، وليأخذن أموالكم، فقال عمر: فوالله ما تمنيت الإمارة إلا يومئذ، جعلت أنصب صدري رجاء أن يقول: هو هذا، قال: فالتفت إلي علي، فأخذ بيده ثم قال: هو هذا، هو هذا.

‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – Ibn Ṭāwūs – his father – al-Muṭalib b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥanṭab:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, when the delegation of (Banū) Thaḳīf came (to him), said (to them), “You either submit or **I appoint a man from me or who is my similarity**, and he will hit your necks and take your offspring as war prisoners, and will confiscate your properties.” So, ‘Umar said, “I swear by Allāh, I never wished for power except on that day. I volunteered for it, wishing that he would say, “This is the one”. But, he instead looked towards ‘Alī, and held his hand and said, “This is the one. This is the one.”⁴⁹⁰

‘Allāmah al-Albānī comments about this report:

قلت: وهذا إسناد صحيح؛ ولكنه مرسل.

⁴⁸⁸ Abū Ya’lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 12, p. 97, # 6731

⁴⁸⁹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 4, p. 375, # 19367

⁴⁹⁰ Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hamām al-Ṣa’nānī, *al-Muṣannaf* [annotator: Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-A’zamī], vol. 11, p. 226, # 20389

I say: **This chain is *ṣaḥīḥ***. However, it is *mursal*.⁴⁹¹

There is no doubt that this is an effective strengthening *shāhid* for the report of Abū Dharr. So, even if, for the sake of argument, the invalid submissions of ‘Allāmah al-Albānī concerning Abū Dharr’s *ḥadīth* are accepted, the above narration of al-Muṭalib nonetheless raises its grade to at least *ḥasan*.

⁴⁹¹ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍa’if wa al-Mawḍū‘ah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fī al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Ma’ārif, 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 10, p. 677, # 4960

31 ḤADĪTH AL-TASHBĪH

INSTANCES OF EQUALITY

When the Prophet, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘ālīhi*, described Amīr al-Mūminīn, *‘alaihi al-salām*, as being “exactly like” himself, or his own “similarity”, what was he saying? Was he talking about physical identicalness? Or, was it about tribal affiliations? What was it exactly? Basically, those statements have deliberately been made general and left open by the Messenger of Allāh. As such, everything is the same between them both except whatever has been excluded as exceptions. In other words, the only differences between the Nabī and the Amīr are those that have been proved through the Qur’ān or authentic *aḥādīth*. In everything else, they were, and are, the same.

Meanwhile, it would not be inappropriate to cite a few examples of equality between the Messenger of Allāh and Imām ‘Alī. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H), for instance, records that the Prophet said:

من أحب عليا فقد أحبني ومن أبغض عليا فقد أبغضني

Whosoever loves ‘Alī has loved me, and whosoever hates ‘Alī has hated me.⁴⁹²

The ‘Allāmah says:

⁴⁹² Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tājātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḡīr wa Ziyādātuhu* (Al-Maktab al-Islāmī), vol. 2, p. 1034, # 5963

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁴⁹³

In simple terms, the obligations to love the Messenger, and to love Amīr al-Mūminīn, are the same. Love or hatred of either of them attracts the *same* recognition, reward or punishment from Allāh the Almighty. Interestingly, Imām ‘Alī was not the only one with this status. Imām Abū Ya’lā (d. 307 H) further records:

حدثنا أبو هشام الرفاعي حدثنا ابن فضيل حدثنا سالم بن أبي حفصة عن أبي حازم
عن أبي هريرة قال : قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه و سلم: من أحب الحسن
والحسين فقد أحبني ومن أبغضها فقد أبغضني

Abū Hishām al-Rufā’ī – Ibn Fuḍayl – Sālim b. Abī Ḥaḥṣah – Abū Ḥāzim – Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said: “Whosoever loves al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn has loved me, and whosoever hates them has hated me.”⁴⁹⁴

Shaykh Dr. Asad says:

إسناده حسن

Its chain is *ḥasan*.⁴⁹⁵

Imām Ibn Majah (d. 273 H) has also recorded the *ḥadīth* through a different *ṭarīq* (route):

حدثنا علي بن محمد حدثنا وكيع عن سفيان عن داود بن أبي عوف أبي الجحاف
وكان مرضيا عن أبي حازم عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
من أحب الحسن والحسين فقد أحبني ومن أبغضها فقد أبغضني

⁴⁹³ *Ibid*

⁴⁹⁴ Abū Ya’lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 11, p. 78, # 6215

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid*

‘Alī b. Muḥammad – Wakī’ – Sufyān – Dāwud b. Abī ‘Awf Abī al-Jihāf
– Abū Ḥāzim – Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “Whosoever loves
al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn has loved me, and whosoever hates them has
hated me.”⁴⁹⁶

‘Abd al-Bāqī states:

إسناده صحيح، رجاله ثقات.

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*. Its narrators are trustworthy.⁴⁹⁷

‘Allāmah al-Albānī also comments:

حسن

*Ḥasan*⁴⁹⁸

So, the Prophet, Amīr al-Mūminīn, Imām al-Ḥasan and Imām al-Ḥusayn, *‘alaihim al-salām*, were, and are, all *equal* in terms of love and hatred from *any* others among the creation. Moreover, their love has been umbilically fused by Allāh. Therefore, just as there can *never* be an excuse – including even ignorance or mistake - for hating the Prophet, there can be none either with regards to *any* other among them. Their love is one indivisible entity, and so is their hatred.

The significance of the above reports is better reflected in this *ḥadīth*, copied by ‘Allāmah al-Albānī:

من أحب عليا فقد أحبني ومن أحبني فقد أحب الله عز وجل ومن أبغض عليا
فقد أبغضني ومن أبغضني فقد أبغض الله عز وجل.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibn Majah Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan* (Dār al-Fikr) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 1, p. 51, # 143

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid*

⁴⁹⁸ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdri al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḡīr wa Ziyādātuhu* (Al-Maktab al-Islāmī), vol. 2, p. 1033, # 5954

Whosoever loves ‘Alī has loved me. And whosoever loves me has loved Allāh the Almighty. Moreover, whosoever hates ‘Alī has hated me. **And whosoever hates me has hated Allāh the Almighty.**⁴⁹⁹

The ‘Allāmah comments:

رواه المخلص في " الفوائد المنتقاة " (10 / 5 / 1) بسند صحيح

Al-Mukhlis recorded it in *al-Fawa'id al-Muntaqāt* (10/5/1) with a **ṣaḥīḥ chain** from Umm Salamah.⁵⁰⁰

In other words:

1. Love of Muḥammad is love of Allāh, and hatred of Muḥammad is hatred of Allāh.
2. Love of ‘Alī is love of Allāh, and hatred of ‘Alī is hatred of Allāh.
3. Love of al-Ḥasan is love of Allāh, and hatred of al-Ḥasan is hatred of Allāh.
4. Love of al-Ḥusayn is love of Allāh, and hatred of al-Ḥusayn is hatred of Allāh.

So, Amīr al-Mūminīn, Imām al-Ḥasan and Imām al-Ḥusayn are *equal* with the Messenger of Allāh in terms of the love or hatred of any of them. Our focus at this point, of course, is only Amīr al-Mūminīn.

Another area of equality between the Prophet of Allāh and Imām ‘Alī is indicated in this *ḥadīth* documented by Imām Aḥmad (d. 241 H):

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن أبي بكير قال ثنا إسرائيل عن أبي إسحاق عن أبي عبد الله الجدلي قال دخلت على أم سلمة فقالت لي أيسب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيكم قلت معاذ الله أو سبحان الله أو كلمة نحوها قالت سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول من سب عليا فقد سبني

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – Yaḥyā b. Abī

⁴⁹⁹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqḥihāb wa Fawā'idihāb* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma'ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 3, pp. 287-288, # 1299

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid*, vol. 3, p. 288, # 1299

Bukayr – Isrāʾīl – Abū Ishāq – Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Jadalī:

I entered upon Umm Salamah and she said to me, “Is the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, being cursed among you?” I said, “Allāh forbid!” or “Glory to Allāh!” or a similar statement. She said, “I heard the Messenger of Allāh saying: **‘Whosoever curses ‘Alī has cursed me.**’”⁵⁰¹

Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁵⁰²

Imām al-Haythamī (d. 807 H) also states:

رواه أحمد ورجاله رجال الصحيح غير أبي عبد الله الجدلي وهو ثقة

Aḥmad recorded it, and its narrators are narrators of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, apart from Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Jadalī and he was trustworthy.⁵⁰³

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) too has this verdict upon the exact same *ḥadīth*:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain⁵⁰⁴

And Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) agrees with him:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰¹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 6, p. 323, # 26791

⁵⁰² *Ibid*

⁵⁰³ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, p. 175, # 14740

⁵⁰⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 3, p. 130, # 4615

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*

It is natural logic, anyway. Cursing is an act of hatred. So, whosoever curses ‘Alī apparently hates him. By that very token, such a person is guilty of hating Allāh. Looking further, there is yet another point of equality between the Nabī and the Amīr. ‘Allāmah al-Albānī documents this *ḥadīth*:

من آذى عليا فقد آذاني

Whosoever hurts ‘Alī has hurt me.⁵⁰⁶

The ‘Allāmah states:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁰⁷

Imām al-Ḥākim also comments:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.⁵⁰⁸

Imām al-Dhahabī affirms the verdict:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁰⁹

Imām al-Haythamī also declares about this *ḥadīth*:

رواه أحمد ... ورجال أحمد ثقات

⁵⁰⁶ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ wa Ziyādātuhu* (Al-Maktab al-Islāmī), vol. 2, p. 1029, # 5924

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid*

⁵⁰⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 131, # 4619

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid*

Aḥmad recorded ... and the narrators of Aḥmad are trustworthy.⁵¹⁰

In Islām, to hurt someone means to do anything that causes physical or emotional discomfort to them. For example, notice what Allāh has said here:

وَاللَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَانِهِمَا مِنْكُم فَاذْوَاهُ

And the two persons among you who commit it (i.e. fornication), hurt them both.⁵¹¹

This is clearly about physical hurt. Let us compare that with this noble verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ آذَوْا مُوسَى فَبَرَّاهُ اللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَجِيهاً

O you who believe! Do not be like those who hurt Mūsā, but Allāh cleared him of that which they said, and he was honourable before Allāh.⁵¹²

They made incorrect statements about Mūsā, *‘alaihi al-salām*. Such statements apparently hurt the feelings and image of this noble prophet. Therefore, to Allāh, they had thereby hurt him. Another example is given in this *ḥadīth* documented by Imām al-Ḥākim:

أخبرني محمد بن أحمد بن تميم القنطري ثنا أبو قلابة الرقاشي ثنا أبو عاصم عن عبد الله بن المؤمل حدثني أبو بكر بن عبيد الله بن أبي ملكية عن أبيه قال جاء رجل من أهل الشام فسب علياً عند ابن عباس فخصه ابن عباس فقال : يا عدو الله أذيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن الذين يؤذون الله ورسوله لعنهم الله في الدنيا والاخرة وأعد لهم عذاباً مهيناً لو كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حياً لأذيته

Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Tamīm al-Qanṭarī – Abū Qilābah al-Raqāshī

⁵¹⁰ Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma’ al-Zawāid* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr; 1412 H), vol. 9, p. 174, # 14736

⁵¹¹ Qur’ān 4:16

⁵¹² Qur’ān 33:69

– Abū ‘Āšim – ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Mu-mal – Abū Bakr b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Abī Malikah – his father:

A Syrian man came and cursed ‘Alī in the presence of Ibn ‘Abbās. So, Ibn ‘Abbās threw pebbles at him and said, “O enemy of Allāh! You have hurt the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. Verily, those who hurt Allāh and His Messenger, Allāh has cursed them in this world, and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating torment. If the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, had been alive, you would have hurt him.”⁵¹³

Al-Ḥākim declares:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.⁵¹⁴

Imām al-Dhahabī also states:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵¹⁵

There is a lot of *ḥawāid* in this *ḥadīth*. Some of them are listed below:

1. Cursing ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib falls under the act of hurting him.
2. Whoever hurts ‘Alī is an enemy of Allāh.
3. Whoever hurts ‘Alī falls under Qur’ān 33:57
4. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib does not need to be physically present before the hurt is done. As long as the act would have hurt him had he been present or would have hurt his name, the crime is completed.
5. Whatsoever hurts ‘Alī also hurts the Messenger of Allāh, and by extension Allāh.
6. Therefore, whoever hurts ‘Alī has hurt Allāh and His Messenger.

There is no doubt that if Amīr al-Mūminīn had been physically present

⁵¹³ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 3, p. 131, # 4618

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid*

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid*

when the Syrian man was cursing him, his feelings would have been hurt. Since whatsoever hurts ‘Alī also hurts the Prophet, it is then the case that the feelings of the latter too would have been hurt. This is what matters in the Sight of Allāh. Would the feelings of ‘Alī have been hurt if he were present? If the answer were positive, then indeed the treason is committed.

Ibn ‘Abbās, *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu*, quoted this verse as applying to all cases where ‘Alī has been hurt:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا

Verily, those who hurt Allāh and His Messenger, Allāh has cursed them in this world, and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating torment.⁵¹⁶

This is the case with ‘Alī. Whoever hurts the Prophet has hurt Allāh. Therefore, Allāh will curse such a person in both this world and the next, and will throw him into Hellfire. The same is exactly the case with ‘Alī. Whosoever hurts Amīr al-Mūminīn has hurt Allāh too. As such, the same punishments that apply in the case of the Messenger also apply in the case of the Amīr.

By contrast, if any believer - other than ‘Alī - had been hurt, the applicable laws are different! Our Creator states:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدْ احْتَمَلُوا بِهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا

And those who hurt the believing men and women undeservedly bear on themselves the crime of slander and plain sin.⁵¹⁷

This verse proves the absolute superiority of Amīr al-Mūminīn over the entire Ummah. If any Muslim is hurt – whether physically or emotionally – the first question to ask is: did he deserve the hurt? In other words, there are cases when the body or feelings of a believer can be deservedly hurt. In such cases, there is no retribution against the person causing the hurt. Even then, where the hurt was undeserved, the offender is only guilty of slander and sin. Therefore, the punishment is different from what is applicable in the cases of the Messenger of Allāh and Amīr al-Mūminīn. Allāh has conjoined hurt of Himself with hurt of His Messenger with *wām al-*

⁵¹⁶ Qur’ān 33:57

⁵¹⁷ Qur’ān 33:58

mushārikah – the conjunction of partnership. In other words, whatsoever applies for Allāh, in any case that He is hurt, also applies for His Messenger in any similar circumstance. So, since Allāh never deserves to be hurt, then His Messenger too is of the same status. By extension, Amīr al-Mūminīn as well can *never* be justifiably hurt. Allāh has protected both the Nabī and the Amīr from ever deserving to be hurt, either physically or emotionally.

32 ḤADĪTH AL-IKHTIYĀR

EXAMINING THE VERSE OF THE CAVE

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) states:

يقول الله إلا تنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثاني اثنين إذ هما في
الغار إذ يقول لصاحبه لا تحزن أن الله معنا

و مثل هذه الفضيلة لم تحصل لغير أبي بكر قطعاً ... و الأفضلية إنما تثبت
بالخصائص لا بالمشاركات ... و قد قال العلماء ما صح لعلي من الفضائل فهي
مشاركة شاركه فيها غيره بخلاف الصديق فإن كثيراً من فضائله و أكثرها خصائص
له لا يشركه فيها غيره

Allāh says: {If you help him not, for Allāh did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of two, when they both were in the cave, when he was saying to his companion: “Do not fear, surely Allāh is with us.”} (9:40)

This merit never reached absolutely anyone other than Abū Bakr ... **And superiority is established only through exclusive merits, and not through shared qualities** ... The scholars have said: “What has been authentically transmitted among the merits of ‘Alī are only shared qualities, which others too share with him, as opposed to al-Siddīq, for lots of his merits and most of them are exclusive to him, and not

shared with him by anyone.”⁵¹⁸

In other words, the above verse establishes the superiority of Abū Bakr over all the Ṣaḥābah. It contains his *exclusive* merit. Our Shaykh says further:

فيقال لا ريب أن الفضيلة التي حصلت لأي بكر قي الهجرة لم تحصل لغيره من
الصحابة بالكتاب و السنة و الإجماع فتكون هذه الأفضلية ثابتة له دون عمر و
عثمان و علي و غيرهم من الصحابة فيكون هو الإمام

So, it is said that there is no doubt that the merit achieved by Abū Bakr during the *Hijrah*, **none other of the Ṣaḥābah achieved it**, in accordance with the Book, the Sunnah and the consensus (of the Sunnī scholars). Therefore, this superiority becomes established for him, and not for ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī or other Ṣaḥābah. As such, he was the Imām.⁵¹⁹

Our Shaykh’s line of argument goes like this:

1. Whichever of the Ṣaḥābah had a merit which none other possessed was the best of them.
2. Such a Ṣaḥābī was also the true Imām among them.

In line with this reasoning, he argues – citing unnamed Sunnī scholars as support - that most of Abū Bakr’s “merits” were exclusive to him, and none of Amīr al-Mūminīn’s merits was exclusive to him! This is very strange though. Throughout this book of ours, we have investigated only authentic *aḥādīth* on *exclusive* merits of ‘Alī, *‘alaibi al-salām*, in the most authoritative Sunnī sources! Our esteemed readers can themselves verify this. Moreover, Imām al-Nasāī (d. 303 H) authored a well-known book – *Khaṣā’iṣ Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī* (The *Exclusive* Merits of Amīr al-Mūminīn ‘Alī) – in which he compiled only Sunnī *aḥādīth* on the *exclusive* merits of Imām ‘Alī! No similar book has ever been written for Abū Bakr, ‘Umar or ‘Uthmān.

Anyway, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah thinks that the Verse of the Cave above contains an exclusive merit of Abū Bakr, which establishes his overall superiority and *Imāmah* over the Ṣaḥābah. In our view – as we will prove –

⁵¹⁸ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālīm], vol. 7, p. 121

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid*

the verse actually does the direct opposite! It basically exposes Abū Bakr and all the Sunnī-only “aḥādīth” about him in very uncomfortable lights. It also totally brings down the Sunnī creed, leaving it no chance of revival!

We will begin our analysis by looking first at the full text of the verse:

إلا تنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثاني اثنين إذ هما في الغار إذ يقول لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا فأنزل الله سكينته عليه وأيده بجنود لم تروها وجعل كلمة الذين كفروا السفلى وكلمة الله هي العليا والله عزيز حكيم

If you help **him** not, for Allāh did indeed help **him** when the disbelievers drove **him** out - the second of two *when* they both were in the cave - when **he** was saying to **his** companion: “Do not fear, surely Allāh is with us.” So, Allāh sent down His *sakinah* upon **him**, and helped **him** with forces which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while it was the Word of Allāh that became the uppermost, and Allāh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.⁵²⁰

The verse is primarily about the Messenger of Allāh, ṣallallāhu ‘alaibi wa ‘alihi. The following points can be deduced from it:

1. The disbelievers drove him out of Makkah. So, he was ordered to migrate to Madīnah by Allāh.
2. He was the *second* of two people, *when* they both were together in the cave.
3. Abū Bakr was the *first* of the two, as he was the only one present with him in the cave. He has also been called the Prophet’s companion.
4. Abū Bakr exhibited fear. So, the Messenger ordered him not to fear. The meaning of the phrase “Allāh is with us” will be discussed in detail soon.
5. Allāh ignored Abū Bakr, and sent down His *sakinah* upon His Prophet *alone*, and further helped him *alone* with unseen forces.
6. Through these actions, Allāh made the plan of the disbelievers to fail, and His Own Plan to succeed.

Particular attention must be paid to this part:

إلا تنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثاني اثنين إذ هما في الغار إذ يقول

⁵²⁰ Qur’ān 9:40

If you help **him** not, for Allāh did indeed help **him** when the disbelievers drove **him** out - the second of two when they both were in the cave - and **he** was saying to **his** companion

The expression “the *second* of two” is a description of the one who was driven out by the disbelievers and helped by Allāh. He was the *second* of two people in the cave, and it was he who said what he said to his companion. This is so obvious from the text of the verse. Meanwhile, Prof. Ibn Yāsīn, a contemporary Sunnī *mufasssīr*, also states in support of our proposition under the verse:

أخرج الطبري بسنده الصحيح عن مجاهد: (إلا تتصروه) ذكر ما كان في أول شأنه حين بعثه يقول الله: فأنا فاعل ذلك به وناصره، كما نصرته إذ ذاك وهو ثاني اثنين.

Al-Ṭabarī records **with his *ṣaḥīḥ* chain** from Mujaḥid that he said: “(If you help him not) He mentioned what was his affair since He appointed him (on a prophetic mission). Allāh says: I do that with Him and I am his Helper, and I helped him when he was like that, **and he was the *second* of two.**”⁵²¹

In very simple terms, the Messenger of Allāh was the *second* of two as we have stated. Abū Bakr was the *first*. Getting this part of the verse straight is extremely crucial to our discussion. This is because the alleged “exclusive merit” of Abū Bakr in it is only a widespread Sunnī misconception that he was the one referred to as “the second of two”! For instance, Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 H) records:

حدثنا إبراهيم بن موسى أخبرنا هشام عن معمر عن الزهري أخبرني أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه أنه سمع خطبة عمر الآخرة حين جلس على المنبر وذلك الغد من يوم توفي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فتشهد وأبو بكر صامت لا يتكلم قال كنت أرجو أن يعيش رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى يدبرنا يريد بذلك أن يكون آخرهم فإن يك محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم قد مات فإن الله تعالى قد جعل بين أظهركم نورا تهتدون به بما هدى الله محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم

⁵²¹ Prof. Dr. Hikmat b. Bashīr b. Yāsīn, *Mawsū'at al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mashbūr min al-Tafsīr bi al-Māthūr* (Madīnah: Dār al-Māthar li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī' wa al-Ṭabā'at; 1st edition, 1420 H), vol. 2, p. 452

وإن أبا بكر صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ثاني اثنين فإنه أولى المسلمين بأموركم فقوموا فبايعوه وكانت طائفة منهم قد بايعوه قبل ذلك في سقيفة بني ساعدة وكانت بيعة العامة على المنبر

Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā – Hishām – Ma’mar – al-Zuhrī – Anas b. Mālīk, may Allāh be pleased with him:

I heard ‘Umar's second sermon which he delivered while he was sitting on the pulpit on the day following the death of the Prophet, peace be upon him. He testified while Abū Bakr was silent and did not say anything. He (‘Umar) said, “I wish that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, had outlived all of us. But if Muḥammad is dead, Allāh nonetheless has kept a light amongst you from which you can receive the same guidance as Allāh guided Muḥammad, peace be upon him, with that. **And Abū Bakr is the companion of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him. He is (also) the *second* of two.** He is the most entitled person among the Muslims to manage your affairs. Therefore get up and swear allegiance to him.”⁵²²

Imām ‘Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211 H) has recorded the same report with the same chain:

أخبرنا عبد الرزاق قال: أخبرنا معمر عن الزهري قال: أخبرني أنس بن مالك ... ثم قال عمر: أما بعد ... فإن يك محمد قد مات فإن الله قد جعل بين أظهركم نورا تهتدون به، هذا كتاب الله فاعتصموا به، تهتدون لما هدى الله به محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم ثم إن أبا بكر رحمه الله - صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وثاني اثنين، وإنه أولى الناس بأموركم، فقوموا، فبايعوه

‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – al-Zuhrī – Anas b. Mālīk:

... Then ‘Umar said: “... But if Muḥammad is dead, Allāh nonetheless has kept a light amongst you from which you can receive guidance. This is the Book of Allāh. So, hold fast to it. You will receive the same guidance as Allāh guided Muḥammad, peace be upon him, with that. **Then, Abū Bakr, may Allāh be merciful to him, is the companion of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, AND the *second***

⁵²² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 6, p. 2639, # 6793

of two. He is the most entitled person among mankind to manage your affairs. Therefore get up and swear allegiance to him.”⁵²³

Commenting on these reports, al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) states:

قوله (وان أبا بكر صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الخ) قال ابن التين قدم
الصحبة لشرفها ولما كان غيره قد يشاركه فيها عطف عليها ما انفرد به أبو بكر وهو
كونه ثاني اثنين وهي أعظم فضائله التي استحق بها ان يكون الخليفة من بعد النبي
صلى الله عليه وسلم ولذلك قال وانه أولى الناس بأمرهم

His statement (Abū Bakr is the companion of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, etc): Ibn al-Tīn said: “He mentioned the companionship first due to its honour. However, since others shared it with him (i.e. Abū Bakr), he (‘Umar) conjoined it with **what was exclusive to Abū Bakr, and that was his being the second of two, and it is the greatest of his merits which entitled him to be the *khalīfah*** after the Prophet, peace be upon him. This was why he (‘Umar) said: “He is the most entitled person among mankind to manage your affairs”.⁵²⁴

It is apparent that the Ahl al-Sunnah, based upon the submissions of ‘Umar and others, consider Abū Bakr to have been the one referred to by Allāh as “the *second* of two” in this verse:

إلا تنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثاني اثنين إذ هما في الغار إذ يقول
لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا فأنزل الله سكينته عليه وأيده بجنود لم تروها

If you help **him** not, for Allāh did indeed help **him** when the disbelievers drove **him** out - the second of two *when* they both were in the cave – when **he** was saying to **his** companion: “Do not fear, surely Allāh is with us.” So, Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon **him**, and helped **him** with forces which you saw not.

If the Sunnī theory were correct, then the following would be true:

⁵²³ Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hamām al-Ṣa’nānī, *al-Muṣannaf* [annotator: Ḥabīb al-Raḥman al-A’ẓamī], vol. 5, pp. 437-438, # 9756

⁵²⁴ Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah li al-Ṭabā’ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 13, pp. 179-180

1. Allāh helped Abū Bakr when the disbelievers drove him out. Allāh did *not* help His Messenger.
2. It was Abū Bakr who said to the Prophet “Do not fear, surely Allāh is with us”. The Messenger was the “companion” of Abū Bakr.
3. Allāh sent down *sakīnah* upon Abū Bakr and helped him with unseen forces. He did *not* send *sakīnah* upon His Prophet and did *not* strengthen him with any forces.

Would a believer ever make any of the above submissions? This is the grand Sunni dilemma!

The patent Sunnī logic is this:

1. Abū Bakr was the *second* of two in the cave with the Messenger.
2. Therefore, he was *second* in rank only to the Prophet.

The truth, however, is that Abū Bakr was actually the *first* of two, while the Messenger of Allāh was the *second*! By the Sunnī logic, the Prophet was in reality second in rank to Abū Bakr!

Well, let us agree, for the sake of argument, that Abū Bakr was the one referred to as “the *second* of two” in the Verse of the Cave. In that case, the Messenger was the *first* of two. By Sunnī logic, Abū Bakr then is the second highest ranking Muslim in this Ummah, after the Prophet, due to his status in that verse. In other words, the first of two is the first in the Ummah; and the *second* of two is the *second* in the Ummah. But, does this arrangement really help the Ahl al-Sunnah? The best way to find out is through this *ḥadīth* recorded by Imām al-Bukhārī:

حدثنا محمد بن سنان حدثنا همام عن ثابت عن أنس عن أبي بكر رضي الله عنه
قال: قلت للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وأنا في الغار لو أن أحدهم نظر تحت قدميه
لأبصرنا فقال ما ظنك يا أبا بكر باثنين الله ثالثهما

Muḥammad b. Sinān – Hamām – Thābit – Anas – Abū Bakr, may Allāh be pleased with him:

I said to the Prophet, peace be upon him, while I was in the cave, “If any of them should look under his feet, he would see us.” He said, “O Abū Bakr! **What do you think of two, the *third* of whom is**

Allāh?⁵²⁵

So, the Messenger is *first* of three, Abū Bakr the *second*, and Allāh the *third*. By Sunnī logic therefore, Abū Bakr is superior to Allāh?! May Allāh forgive us and save us from such blasphemies. The above question of the Prophet was picked from this verse:

ألم تر أن الله يعلم ما في السماوات وما في الأرض ما يكون من نجوى ثلاثة إلا هو رابعهم ولا خمسة إلا هو سادسهم ولا أدنى من ذلك ولا أكثر إلا هو معهم أين كانوا

Have you not seen that Allāh knows whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth? **There is no private conversation of three, except He is *their fourth*, nor five except He is *their sixth*, nor of less than that or more, except He is with them wherever they may be.**⁵²⁶

Let us connect everything now. First, we have the verse:

إذ يقول لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا

When he was saying to his companion: “Do not fear, surely Allāh is **WITH US.**”

Then the *ḥadīth*:

فقال ما ظنك يا أبا بكر باثنين الله ثالثهما

He said, “O Abū Bakr! **What do you think of two, the *third* of whom is Allāh?**”

Both sentences are then connected by Allāh Himself:

ما يكون من نجوى ثلاثة إلا هو رابعهم ولا خمسة إلا هو سادسهم ولا أدنى من ذلك ولا أكثر إلا هو معهم أين ما كانوا

⁵²⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm b. Mughīrah al-Bukhārī al-J’ufī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Baghā], vol. 3, p. 1337, # 3453

⁵²⁶ Qur’ān 58:7

There is no private conversation of three, except He is *their fourth*, nor five except He is *their sixth*, nor of less than that or more, except He is WITH THEM wherever they may be.⁵²⁷

It is obvious. Allāh was with His Prophet and Abū Bakr, only in the sense that He was present with them both in the cave. He was *with them* solely on account of His being their third. However, this was no merit at all, much less an exclusive achievement! Allāh is similarly present with every single individual, or any number of individuals, staying secretly anywhere. As such, He is present with even pagans and criminals whenever they plot their disbelief and evil deeds!

Here, we get to the most serious aspect of the Verse of the Cave. The first undeniable fact, at this stage, is that Allāh ignored Abū Bakr and did not help him, even though there were two of them together in the cave:

إلا تنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثاني اثنين إذ هما في الغار

If you help him not, for Allāh did indeed help **him** when the disbelievers drove him out - the second of two when they both were in the cave.

We ask: why? Allāh has made a promise in His Book:

O you who believe! If you help Allāh, He will help you.⁵²⁸

So, was Abū Bakr a believer? Was he helping the Cause of Allāh with his *Hijrah*? If the answers to both questions were “yes”, then why did Allāh refuse to help him? Or, is it that Abū Bakr actually needed no help? In that case, why was he hiding with the Prophet in the cave? The fact that Allāh ignored Abū Bakr and did not help him raises red flags concerning his *imān* and his real intentions with his migration.

Allāh provided two kinds of help in the cave:

فأنزل الله سكينته عليه وأيده بجنود لم تروها

So, Allāh sent down His *sakinah* upon **him**, and helped **him** with

⁵²⁷ Qur’ān 58:7

⁵²⁸ Qur’ān 47:7

forces which you saw not.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 H) comments:

{فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ} أَي : تَأْيِيدَهُ وَنَصْرَهُ عَلَيْهِ ، أَي : عَلَى الرَّسُولِ فِي أَشْهَرِ الْقَوْلِينَ ... وَلِهَذَا قَالَ : {وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا} أَي : الْمَلَائِكَةُ ،

{So, Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon him}: meaning, (He sent down) His assistance and help upon him, that his, upon the Messenger according to the more popular of two views ... This is why He said: {and helped him with forces which you saw not}, that is, the angels.⁵²⁹

When this verse was revealed – about ten years after the incident – some (if not all) of the disbelievers who wanted to kill the Prophet that day had become Muslims. So, the phrase “which you saw not” was apparently directed at them. Allāh sent His *sakīnah* upon His Messenger, and further helped him with unseen forces, namely the angels. Abū Bakr was ignored. The foundational fact to note about *sakīnah* is that it is revealed into the heart:

هو الذي أنزل السكينة في قلوب المؤمنين ليزدادوا إيماناً مع إيمانهم

He it is **Who sent down *sakīnah* into the hearts of the believers, that they may grow more in faith (*īmān*)** along with their (present) faith (*īmān*).⁵³⁰

The following points are clear from the verse:

1. *Sakīnah* is revealed into the heart.
2. It only strengthens the already existing *īmān* (faith) in the heart.
3. As such, it never enters a heart with no *īmān* (faith), since there would be nothing for it to strengthen.

In particular, before Allāh sends down *sakīnah* to any heart, He first looks at what is inside it to find *īmān*:

⁵²⁹ Abū al-Fidā Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar b. Kathīr al-Qurshī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm* (Dār al-Ṭaybah li al-Naṣr wa al-Tawzīʿ; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah], vol. 4, p. 155

⁵³⁰ Qurʾān 48:4

لقد رضي الله عن المؤمنين إذ يبايعونك تحت الشجرة فعلم ما في قلوبهم فأنزل
السكينة عليهم

Indeed, Allāh was pleased with the believers when they gave their *ba'yah* to you (O Muḥammad) under the tree. **He knew what was in their hearts. Therefore, He sent down *sakīnah* upon them.**⁵³¹

The question is: why did Allāh send down *sakīnah* into the heart of His Prophet alone, despite the presence of Abū Bakr with him? In similar cases, He had equally revealed it to whichever believer was with him:

فأنزل الله سكينته على رسوله وعلى المؤمنين

So, Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon His Messenger **and upon the believers.**⁵³²

And:

ثم أنزل الله سكينته على رسوله وعلى المؤمنين وأنزل جنودا لم تروها

Then Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon His Messenger **and upon the believers**, and sent down forces which you saw not.⁵³³

So, why did He exclude Abū Bakr in the cave? It is obvious that He checked the latter's heart, alongside that of His Prophet. Then, He decided to send His *sakīnah* to His Messenger only. We again ask our Sunnī brothers: why? According to the Ahl al-Sunnah, Abū Bakr was the *sayyid* of believers. If that were true, then his *īmān* would be the greatest among the Ṣaḥābah. In that case, Allāh would certainly have blessed him with His *sakīnah* as He did with His Messenger. But, He did not! We ask once more: why would Allāh refuse to send *sakīnah* into a heart filled with strong, undiluted *īmān*? Looking at everything, the only logical explanation is that Allāh looked at the heart of Abū Bakr and found no *īmān* there. Therefore, He decided to send down His *sakīnah* upon His Prophet alone.

Expectedly, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah feels severely troubled by this conclusion:

⁵³¹ Qur'ān 48:18

⁵³² Qur'ān 48:26

⁵³³ Qur'ān 9:26

وأما قول الرافضي إن القرآن حيث ذكر إنزال السكينة على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم شرك معه المؤمنين إلا هذا الموضع ولا نقص أعظم منه فالجواب أولاً أن هذا يوهم أنه ذكر ذلك في مواضع متعددة وليس كذلك بل لم يذكر ذلك إلا في قصة حنين ... وقد ذكر إنزال السكينة على المؤمنين وليس معهم الرسول في قوله إنا فتحنا لك فتحاً مبيناً سورة الفتح 1 إلى قوله هو الذي أنزل السكينة في قلوب المؤمنين سورة الفتح 4 الآية وقوله لقد رضي الله عن المؤمنين إذ يبايعونك تحت الشجرة فعلم ما في قلوبهم فأنزل السكينة عليهم سورة الفتح 18

As for the statement of the Rāfiḍī that “the Qur’ān, whenever it mentions the descent of *sakinah* upon the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, always conjoined the believers with him, except in this one place (i.e. in the cave), and there is no disgrace worse than it.”

The first answer is that this one (i.e. the Rāfiḍī) hallucinates that it (i.e. the Qur’ān) mentions that (i.e. the descent of *sakinah* upon the Prophet and the believers together) as having occurred at several places. But this is not so. Rather, it has not mentioned that except in the story of Ḥunayn... It has (also) mentioned the descent of *sakinah* upon the believers and the Messenger was not included with them in His Statement {Verily, We have given you [O Muḥammad] a manifest victory} (48:1) until His Statement {He it is Who sent down *sakinah* into the hearts of the believers} (48:4) and His Statement {Indeed, Allāh was pleased with the believers when they gave their *ba’yah* to you [O Muḥammad] under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down *sakinah* upon them} (48:18)⁵³⁴

First and foremost, the Rāfiḍī did not claim that *sakinah* was revealed upon the Prophet and the believers together at several places. His statement is very clear:

وأما قول الرافضي إن القرآن حيث ذكر إنزال السكينة على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم شرك معه المؤمنين إلا هذا الموضع ولا نقص أعظم منه

As for the statement of the Rāfiḍī that “the Qur’ān, **whenever it**

⁵³⁴ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 8, pp. 488-489

mentions the descent of *sakīnah* upon the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, always conjoined the believers with him, except in this one place (i.e. in the cave), and there is no disgrace worse than it.

To refute him, our Shaykh only has to show us a single place in the Qur’ān where Allāh has revealed His *sakīnah* upon His Prophet alone, without joining the believers with him. The truth is: the Rāfiḍī was correct! The only instance where *sakīnah* descended upon the Messenger alone was during his stay in the cave with Abū Bakr. That indeed is a severe slur on the latter.

Secondly, our Shaykh’s claim that *sakīnah* descended upon the Prophet and the believers together only at Ḥunayn (8 H), and at no other place, is equally untrue! The same thing occurred at al-Ḥudaybiyyah (6 H) too:

إذ جعل الذين كفروا في قلوبهم الحمية حمية الجاهلية فأنزل الله سكينته على
رسوله وعلى المؤمنين وألزمهم كلمة التقوى وكانوا أحق بها وأهلها وكان الله بكل
شيء عليماً لقد صدق الله رسوله الرؤيا بالحق لتدخلن المسجد الحرام إن شاء الله
آمنين محلقين رءوسكم ومقصرين لا تخافون فعلم ما لم تعلموا فجعل من دون ذلك
فتحاً قريباً

When those who disbelieve had put in their hearts pride and haughtiness, the pride and haughtiness of *Jahiliyyah*, then Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and made them stick to the Word of Piety, and they were well entitled to it and worthy of it. And Allāh is the All-Knower of everything. Indeed Allāh shall fulfil the true vision which He showed to His Messenger. Certainly you shall enter the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* (in Makkah), *inshā Allāh*, secure, (some) having your heads shaved, and (some) having your hair cut short, having no fear. He knew what you knew not, and He granted besides that a near victory.⁵³⁵

This was two years before Ḥunayn, when the unbelievers – who were still in control of Makkah – arrogantly prevented the Messenger and the believers from performing *Hajj* there. Instead, the Muslims, headed by the Prophet, entered into a peace agreement with the pagan Makkans, granting the latter lots of concessions. Allāh then promised the believers of a near conquest of Makkah. It happened soon thereafter, in a bloodless manner.

⁵³⁵ Qur’ān 48:26-27

In the light of the above fact, the fallacy of this submission of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah also comes to the fore:

وقد ذكر إنزال السكينة على المؤمنين وليس معهم الرسول في قوله إنا فتحنا لك
فتحاً مبيناً سورة الفتح 1 إلى قوله هو الذي أنزل السكينة في قلوب المؤمنين سورة
الفتح 4 الآية وقوله لقد رضي الله عن المؤمنين إذ يبايعونك تحت الشجرة فعلم ما
في قلوبهم فأنزل السكينة عليهم سورة الفتح 18

It has (also) mentioned the descent of *sakinah* upon the believers and the Messenger was not included with them in His Statement {Verily, We have given you [O Muḥammad] a manifest victory} (48:1) until His Statement {He it is Who sent down *sakinah* into the hearts of the believers} (48:4) and His Statement {Indeed, Allāh was pleased with the believers when they gave their *ba'yah* to you [O Muḥammad] under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down *sakinah* upon them} (48:18)

All of those verses were revealed about al-Ḥudaybiyyah! Allāh mentions His revelation of *sakinah*, on that occasion, upon His Prophet only once, and mentions its descent upon the believers on the same occasion thrice – all of them in the same *Surah* which was specifically sent down about that *singular* event. Yet, the bottomline remains that the *sakinah* came upon the Messenger *and* the believers *together* at Ḥudaybiyyah! Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah's lowly attempt to wreck the verses out of context and to impose a misleading tag upon them does not augur well for his image as a scholar. The truth remains: whenever *sakinah* descended upon the Prophet, it always also descended upon all believers with him, excluding only the hypocrites and the pagans. Moreover, Allāh never excluded His Messenger from His *sakinah* while sending it upon the believers present with him.

This takes us back to the beginning. Why did Allāh exclude Abū Bakr from His *sakinah*, even though he was with His Prophet?

Having failed woefully in his “first answer”, our Shaykh attempts a second:

ويقال ثانياً الناس قد تنازعوا في عود الضمير في قوله تعالى فأنزل الله سكينته عليه
سورة التوبة 40 فمنهم من قال إنه عائد إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ومنهم من
قال إنه عائد إلى أبي بكر لأنه أقرب المذكورين ولأنه كان محتاجاً إلى إنزال السكينة
فأنزل السكينة عليه كما أنزلها على المؤمنين الذين بايعوه تحت الشجرة والنبي صلى

الله عليه و سلم كان مستغنيا عنها في هذه الحال لكمال طمأنينته بخلاف إنزالها يوم
حين فإنه كان محتاجا إليها لانهزام جمهور أصحابه وإقبال العدو نحوه وسوقه ببغلتة
إلى العدو

It is said, secondly: people disagree on exactly who was intended with His statement {So Allāh sent down His *sakinah* upon him} in *Surah al-Tambah* (9), verse 40 [i.e. the Verse of the Cave]. Some of them say that it refers to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and some of them say it refers to Abū Bakr, because he was the last mentioned character before the statement, and because he needed the descent of *sakinah*. Therefore, He sent down *sakinah* upon him as He sent it down upon the believers who gave the *ba'yah* under the tree. And the Prophet, peace be upon him, did not need it in this condition, due to his perfect calm, as opposed to its descent on the Day of Ḥunayn, for he was then (i.e. at Ḥunayn) in need of it due to the flight of the majority of his Ṣaḥābah (from the battlefield), and the approach of the enemy troops, and his drive with his female mule towards the enemy troops.⁵³⁶

This one is even far worse! To begin with, suggesting that the *sakinah* descended upon Abū Bakr in the Verse of the Cave, and not the Prophet, is high blasphemy. Let us have a renewed look at the verse:

إلا تنصروه فقد نصره الله إذ أخرجه الذين كفروا ثاني اثنين إذ هما في الغار إذ يقول
لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا فأنزل الله سكينته عليه وأيده بجنود لم تروها

If you help him not, **for Allāh did indeed help him** when the disbelievers drove him out - the second of two *when* they both were in the cave – when he was saying to his companion: “Do not fear, surely Allāh is with us.” So, Allāh sent down His *sakinah* upon him, **and helped him with forces which you saw not.**

For Allāh’s sake, why would He help Abū Bakr with angels, at the expense of His Messenger?! Besides, is the verse not clear enough about who was helped? The world is strange, indeed. The context of the verse has perfectly removed any need for any grammatical acrobatics in understanding its meaning. What our Shaykh suggests only applies where there is ambiguity in the statement. There is none here. Anyway, as stated by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr,

⁵³⁶ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muasassat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Salīm], vol. 8, pp. 489-490

the majority of Sunnī scholars agree with the apparent teaching of the verse:

{فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ} أي : تأييده ونصره عليه ، أي : على الرسول في أشهر
القولين

{So, Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon him}: meaning, (He sent down)
His assistance and help upon him, that his, **upon the Messenger**
according to the more popular of two views.⁵³⁷

Our Shaykh also suggests that *sakīnah* is revealed to remove fear and restore calm, a submission completely contradictory to the Qur’ān:

هو الذي أنزل السكينة في قلوب المؤمنين ليزدادوا إيماناً مع إيمانهم

He it is **Who sent down *sakīnah* into the hearts of the believers,**
THAT THEY MAY GROW MORE IN FAITH (*ĪMĀN*) along
with their (present) faith (*imān*).⁵³⁸

It is not about fear. It is about *imān*. Since growth in *imān* is needed in both periods of calm and unrest, then the foundation of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah’s second “answer” collapses at this point. Besides, the Messenger of Allāh was perfectly calm at al-Ḥudaybiyyah, as our Shaykh himself confesses. Yet, Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon him. Interestingly, the believers were also calm then, and He still sent down His *sakīnah* upon them! Where has our Shaykh got his idea that the Prophet did not need *sakīnah* at al-Ḥudaybiyyah or in the cave? Is he accusing Allāh of doing needless things, by sending down His *sakīnah* upon His Messenger when the latter did not need it? This reveals the extent to which some people can go to blaspheme Allāh and His Prophet just to uplift Abū Bakr!

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah now moves to his final “answer”:

يقال على هذا لما قال لصاحبه إن الله معنا والنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم هو المتبوع المطاع وأبو بكر تابع مطيع وهو صاحبه والله معها فإذا حصل للمتبوع في هذه الحال سكينة وتأييد كان ذلك للتابع أيضاً بحكم الحال فإنه صاحب تابع لازم ولم يحتاج

⁵³⁷ Abū al-Fidā Ismā’īl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr al-Qurshī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* (Dār al-Ṭaybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah], vol. 4, p. 155

⁵³⁸ Qur’ān 48:4

أن يذكر هنا أبو بكر لكمال الملازمة والمصاحبة التي توجب مشاركة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في التأييد

It is said upon this: when he said to his companion, “Allāh is with us”, the Prophet, peace be upon him, was the leader while Abū Bakr was the follower and was his companion, and Allāh was with them both. So when *sakīnah* and help got to the leader in this circumstance, it also got to the follower in the same circumstance. This is because he was a companion and a sticking follower, and there was no need here to mention Abū Bakr here, due to the perfect connection and companionship, which necessitated his benefitting in the help along with the Prophet, peace be upon him.⁵³⁹

Put in clearer words, Abū Bakr was a necessary beneficiary of Allāh’s Help to His Messenger. So, the Qur’ān sees no need to mention the former’s name again. Well, it might truly be said that Abū Bakr also benefitted from Allāh’s provision of security to His Prophet. However, the same cannot be said about His *sakīnah*, which has to do only with the growth of *īmān* in the heart:

هو الذي أنزل السكينة في قلوب المؤمنين ليزدادوا إيماناً مع إيمانهم

He it is **Who sent down *sakīnah* into the hearts of the believers, THAT THEY MAY GROW MORE IN FAITH (ĪMĀN)** along with their (present) faith (*īmān*).⁵⁴⁰

It would be *very* illogical to claim that a growth in *īmān* by the Messenger of Allāh somehow also means a similar situation for Abū Bakr. This is why, at al-Ḥudaybiyyah, despite that the believers among the Ṣaḥābah present there were also “companions” and “sticking followers” of the Prophet, Allāh still saw the need to separately send down *sakīnah* upon them:

فأنزل الله سكنته على رسوله وعلى المؤمنين

So, Allāh sent down His *sakīnah* upon His Messenger **and upon the believers**.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁹ Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, *Minḥāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah* (Muassasat Qurṭubah; 1st edition, 1406 H) [annotator: Dr. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim], vol. 8, p. 490

⁵⁴⁰ Qur’ān 48:4

⁵⁴¹ Qur’ān 48:26

Interestingly, the believing Ṣaḥābah at al-Ḥudaybiyyah – along with the Prophet - were in perfect calm, and not in fear. Nonetheless, Allāh revealed His *sakīnah* upon them. This further debunks the notion of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah that *sakīnah* is sent down only to remove fears in precarious situations. How would he explain what Allāh did at al-Ḥudaybiyyah? On the other hand, Abū Bakr displayed demeaning levels of fear in the cave:

إذ يقول لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا

When **he was saying** to his companion: “**Do not fear**, surely Allāh is with us.”

He did not say it once! He was *repeatedly* saying it to him. The meaning would have been different if Allāh had said “while he was saying....” or “when he said....”. Abū Bakr, apparently, did not have sufficient belief in the words of the Messenger of Allāh. This was why he did not calm down even though the Prophet had assured him of Allāh’s Presence. Allāh was certainly aware of their situation, and would surely help them both if He found *imān* and sincerity in their hearts. But, even after repeated assurances by the Messenger of Allāh, Abū Bakr was still in fear. What exactly did he doubt? The presence of Allāh with them? The existence of Allāh? The *nubunnah* of Muḥammad? His own *imān* and sincerity? Is there really any justification for Abū Bakr’s failure to believe the Prophet? That was thirteen years after he supposedly accepted Islām! Since he was like that after so many years, what guarantees were there that he became better during the ten, more prosperous and more politicized years of the Madinan era? How could he even have doubted at all a single letter uttered by the Messenger if he really was a believer? No wonder, when Allāh looked into Abū Bakr’s heart during his stay in the cave, He refused to send down His *sakīnah* upon him.

33 ḤADĪTH AL-IKHTIYĀR

‘ALĪ: THE TRUE SECOND OF TWO

In the cave, the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣallallāhu ‘alaibī wa ‘ālibī*, repeatedly assured Abū Bakr of Allāh’s Presence. But it did not work:

إذ يقول لصاحبه لا تحزن إن الله معنا

When **he was saying** to his companion: “**Do not fear**, surely Allāh is with us.”

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 H) comments about this verse:

عام الهجرة ، لما هم المشركون بقتله أو حبسه أو نفيه ، فخرج منهم هارباً صحبة صدّيقه وصاحبه أبي بكر بن أبي قحافة ، فلجأ إلى غار ثور ثلاثة أيام ليرجع الطّلابُ الذين خرجوا في آثارهم ، ثم يسيرا نحو المدينة ، فجعل أبو بكر ، رضي الله عنه ، يجزع أن يَظْلَعَ عليهم أحد ، فيخلص إلى الرسول ، عليه السلام منهم أذى ، فجعل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يُسَكِّنُهُ وَيَثَبِّتُهُ ويقول : " يا أبا بكر ، ما ظنك باثنين الله ثالثهما "

During the year of the *Hijrah*, the pagans tried to kill, imprison or expel him (i.e the Prophet). So, he escaped with his friend and companion, Abū Bakr b. Abī Quḥāfah, to the *Ṭhanr* Cave. They remained in there for three days. So the scouts who were sent in their pursuit returned, and they proceeded to Madīnah. (While in the cave), Abū Bakr, may

Allāh be pleased with him, was afraid that they might be discovered by someone, that some harm might come to the Messenger, peace be upon him, from them. **Therefore, the Prophet, peace be upon him, kept reassuring him and strengthening his resolve**, saying, “O Abū Bakr! What do you think of two, the *third* of whom is Allāh?”⁵⁴²

Apparently, one word was *not* enough for Abū Bakr. When the Prophet mentioned the presence of Allāh the first time, he obviously noticed that his companion was not convinced. So, he kept repeating it, telling him not to fear. The Sunnī argument is that Abū Bakr only had great, uncontrollable fears for the life and safety of the Messenger of Allāh. Well, there is nothing in the verse or *ḥadīth* remotely suggesting that. By contrast, the words of the Prophet, “Allāh is with *us*”, suggest that Abū Bakr’s fears were about both of them together in the cave. Otherwise, he would have said, “Allāh is with *me*”, placing the emphasis upon himself. Abū Bakr’s fears about the Prophet could also have actually been self-serving! Their fates were interconnected in that dire situation. If the Messenger fell into any danger, Abū Bakr was sure to have a good taste of it too. So, he wanted the Prophet safe, so that he too could be safe.

What support our contention – that Abū Bakr did not really care about the Prophet’s life – are his latter actions on the battlefields. For instance, he abandoned the Messenger of Allāh to the mercy of the pagans on different days of battle, and fled away, again and again, with his life from *jihād*. Imām Muslim (d. 261 H) records:

حدثنا محمد بن أبي بكر المدي وحامد بن عمر البكراني ومحمد بن عبد الأعلى قالوا
حدثنا المعتمر (وهو ابن سليمان) قال سمعت أبي عن أبي عثمان قال لم يبق مع
رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في بعض تلك الأيام التي قاتل فيها رسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم غير طلحة وسعد عن حديثها

Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Muqaddamī, Ḥāmid b. ‘Umar al-Bakrāwī and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-A’lā – al-Mu’tamar (and he is Ibn Sulaymān) – father – Abū ‘Uthmān:

“None remained with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, **on some of the days** in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon

⁵⁴² Abū al-Fidā Ismā’īl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr al-Qurshī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* (Dār al-Ṭaybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’; 2nd edition, 1420 H) [annotator: Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah], vol. 4, p. 155

him, was fighting **apart from Ṭalḥah and Sa’d**. They both (i.e. Ṭalḥah and Sa’d) narrated that to me.”⁵⁴³

On several expeditions of the Prophet, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān fled and escaped from battle! They ran away, and did not look back, knowing fully well that their actions could get the Prophet killed, injured or imprisoned.

In any case, what matters to our discussion in this chapter is that Abū Bakr *doubted* the assurances of the Messenger of Allāh while they both were in danger, in the cave. He was unconvinced by them. Therefore, when Allāh sent down His *sakīnah*, He excluded him. The same thing happened with ‘Umar later on the Day of al-Ḥudaybiyyah. Imām Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 H) records his own words concerning what he did on that day:

فقال عمر بن الخطاب رضوان الله عليه والله ما شككت منذ أسلمت إلا يومئذ
فاتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقلت أأنت رسول الله حق

So, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, said (about the Day of al-Ḥudaybiyyah): “By Allāh! **I never doubted since I accepted Islām EXCEPT on that day**. So, I went to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, ‘**Are you not truly the Messenger of Allāh?**’”⁵⁴⁴

‘Allāmah al-Albānī (d. 1420 H) comments:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁴⁵

Moreover, Shaykh al-Arnāuṭ agrees:

⁵⁴³ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 4, p. 1879, # 2414 (47)

⁵⁴⁴ Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān b. Aḥmad b. Ḥibbān b. Mu’ādh b. Ma’bad al-Tamīmī al-Dārimī al-Bustī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bi Tartīb Ibn Balbān* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 2nd edition, 1414 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Shu’ayb al-Arnāuṭ], vol. 11, p. 216, # 4872

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid*

It is a *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*⁵⁴⁶

He doubted the *nubunwah* of Muḥammad on that day! This removed him from the ranks of believers. So, when Allāh sent down His *sakinah*, He excluded ‘Umar, and whoever was like him:

فأنزل الله سكينته على رسوله وعلى المؤمنين

So, Allāh sent down His *sakinah* upon His Messenger **and upon the believers**.⁵⁴⁷

And:

لقد رضي الله عن المؤمنين إذ يبايعونك تحت الشجرة فعلم ما في قلوبهم فأنزل
السكينة عليهم

He knew what was in their hearts. Therefore, He sent down *sakinah* upon them.⁵⁴⁸

At this point, it is apposite to quote this verse:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

The believers are only those who have believed in Allāh and His Messenger, **and do not doubt afterwards**, and they do *jihad* with their wealth *and with their lives*, for the Cause of Allāh. They are the truthful ones.⁵⁴⁹

Did Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ever doubt Allāh or His Messenger after they had accepted Islām? Did Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ever shield their lives from *jihad* by running away? Were they true believers then? Can people like them really be the best ones in this Ummah after our Prophet? What about those of the

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid*

⁵⁴⁷ Qur’ān 48:26

⁵⁴⁸ Qur’ān 48:18

⁵⁴⁹ Qur’ān 49:15

Ṣaḥābah, like Imām ‘Alī, *‘alaihi al-salām*, and perhaps others, who never doubted after their acceptance of Islām, and who never fled the battlefield? How could they have been inferior? How can a doubter be superior to a firm, unshakable believer? How can someone who escapes with his life from *jihād* be better than someone who completely sold his life to Allāh? How can someone who abandoned the Messenger of Allāh in fatal danger and ran to save his own life be more valuable than another who placed his life in the midst of pagan swords so that the Prophet could live?

Most importantly, the Messenger also specifically named the second best of the entirety of this Ummah – during his lifetime – after himself. It is in *Ḥadīth al-Ikhtiyār*, recorded by Imām al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H):

حدثنا محمد بن جابات الجند نيسابوري و الحسن بن علي المعمرى قالا : ثنا عبد الرزاق عن معمر عن ابن أبي نجيح عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس قال لما زوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم فاطمة عليا قالت فاطمة : يا رسول الله زوجتني من رجل فقير ليس له شيء فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : أما ترضين يا يا فاطمة أن الله عز و جل اختار من أهل الأرض رجلين أحدهما أبوك والآخر زوجك

Muḥammad b. Jābāt al-Jund Naysābūrī AND al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Ma’marī – ‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – Ibn Abī Najīḥ – Mujāhid – Ibn ‘Abbās:

When the Prophet, peace be upon him, married Fāṭimah to ‘Alī, Fāṭimah said, “O Messenger of Allāh! You are marrying me to a poor man who has nothing.” So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, said, “Are you not pleased, O Fāṭimah, that **Allāh the Almighty the Most Glorious chose, from the people of the earth, two men:** one of them is your father and the other is your husband?”⁵⁵⁰

Concerning the *First Narrator B*, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī states:

الحسن بن علي المعمرى ... هو صدوق حافظ

Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Ma’marī ... **He is *ṣadūq* (very truthful), a *ḥāfiẓ***

⁵⁵⁰ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad b. Ayūb al-Ṭabarānī, *Mu’jam al-Kabīr* (Mosul: Maktabah al-‘Ulūm wa al-Ḥukm; 2nd edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Ḥamadī b. ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī], vol. 11, p. 93, # 11153

(*ḥadīth* scientist).⁵⁵¹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 852 H) says something similar:

الحسن بن علي بن شبيب المعمرى الحافظ واسع العلم والرحلة

Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Shabīb al-Ma’marī: **the ḥāfiẓ (ḥadīth scientist), very knowledgeable** and widely travelled (in search of knowledge).⁵⁵²

And Imām al-Dhahabī (d. 748 H) corroborates them:

المعمري: الامام، الحافظ، المجود، البارع، محدث العراق، أبو علي، الحسن بن علي بن شبيب البغدادي المعمرى.

Al-Ma’marī: **the Imām, the ḥāfiẓ (ḥadīth scientist)**, the generous, the pious, **the ḥadīth master of ‘Irāq**, Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Shabīb al-Baghdādī al-Ma’marī.⁵⁵³

Imām al-Ḥākim (d. 403 H) has equally documented his chain in his *Mustadrak*:

حدثنا أبو سعيد أحمد بن يعقوب الثقفي ثنا الحسن بن علي المعمرى ثنا أبو مصعب الزهري ثنا هشام بن عمار السلمي

Abū Sa’īd Aḥmad b. Ya’qūb al-Thaqafī – **al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Ma’marī** – Abū Muṣ’ab al-Zuhri - Hishām b. ‘Ammār al-Sulamī....⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵¹ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ b. Tajātī b. Ādam al-Ashqūdī al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah wa Shayḥun min Fiqhīyah wa Fawā'idihāh* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'; 1st edition, 1415 H), vol. 6, pp. 59-60, # 2520

⁵⁵² Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Miẓān* (Beirut: Manshūrāt Muasassat al-‘Ālamī li al-Maṭbū’āt; 2nd edition, 1390 H), vol. 2, p. 221, # 975

⁵⁵³ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Sīyar A’lām al-Nubalā* (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risālah; 9th edition, 1413 H) [annotators of the thirteenth volume: Shu’ayb al-Arnāūṭ and ‘Alī Abū Zayd], vol. 13, pp. 510-511, # 254

⁵⁵⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 2, p. 279, # 3005

Al-Ḥākim says about the chain:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.⁵⁵⁵

And al-Dhahabī corroborates him:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁵⁶

This proves that al-Ma’marī was *thiqah* (trustworthy).

Al-Ḥāfiẓ also states about the second narrator:

عبد الرزاق بن همام بن نافع الحميري مولاهم أبو بكر الصنعاني ثقة حافظ

‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Hammām b. Nāfi’ al-Ḥumayrī, their freed slave, Abū Bakr al-Ṣan’ānī: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy), ḥāfiẓ (a ḥadīth scientist)**.⁵⁵⁷

He further says about the third narrator:

معمر بن راشد الأزدي مولاهم أبو عروة البصري نزيل اليمن ثقة ثبت فاضل

Ma’mar b. Rāshid al-Azdī, their freed slave, Abū ‘Urwah al-Baṣrī, he lived in Yemen: ***Thiqah* (trustworthy), thabt (accurate), faḍīl (meritorious)**.⁵⁵⁸

The fourth narrator is like him, as confirmed by Imām al-Dhahabī:

عبد الله بن أبي نجيح المكي، صاحب التفسير. أخذ عن مجاهد، وعطاء، وهو من الأئمة الثقات.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid*

⁵⁵⁷ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Taḥdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 1, p. 599, # 4078

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 202, # 6833

‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Najīḥ al-Makkī: the scholar of *tafsīr*. He learnt from Mujāhid and ‘Aṭā and was one of the **thiqah (trustworthy) Imāms**.⁵⁵⁹

Al-Ḥāfiz adds:

عبد الله بن أبي نجيح يسار المكي أبو يسار الثقي مولاهم ثقة رمي بالقدر وربما
دلس

‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Najīḥ Yasār al-Makkī, Abū Yasār al-Thaqafī, their freed slave: **Thiqah (trustworthy)**, accused of believing in fatalism, and **maybe he practised *tadlis***.⁵⁶⁰

There is a *probability* that he practised *tadlis*. It is not definite. In any case, his ‘*an-an*’ reports from Mujāhid are accepted as *ṣaḥīḥ*. For instance, Imām Muslim records this chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*:

وحدثني حسن بن علي الحلواني حدثنا زيد بن الحباب حدثني إبراهيم بن نافع
حدثني عبدالله بن أبي نجيح عن مجاهد عن عائشة رضي الله عنها

Hasan b. ‘Alī al-Ḥalwānī – Zayd b. al-Ḥabāb – Ibrāhīm b. Nāfi’ – ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Najīḥ – Mujāhid – ‘Āishah, may Allāh be pleased with her.⁵⁶¹

Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H) also records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا عبد الرزاق ثنا معمر عن بن أبي نجيح عن مجاهد
عن عبد الرحمن بن أبي ليلى عن كعب بن عجرة

⁵⁵⁹ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-ʿIṭidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah; 1st edition, 1382 H) [annotator: ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī], vol. 2, p. 515, # 4651

⁵⁶⁰ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrib al-Tabḍīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-ʿIlmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā], vol. 1, p. 541, # 3673

⁵⁶¹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Fuād ‘Abd al-Bāqī], vol. 2, p. 870, # 1211 (133)

‘Abd Allāh (b. Aḥmad) – my father (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal) – **‘Abd al-Razzāq – Ma’mar – Ibn Abī Najīḥ – Mujāhid** – ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abī Laylī – Ka’b b. ‘Ujrah.⁵⁶²

And Shaykh al-Arnānūṭ comments:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is ṣaḥīḥ upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁵⁶³

Imām al-Ḥākim is not left out:

أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي بهمدان ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين ثنا آدم بن أبي
إياس ثنا ورقاء عن ابن أبي نجيح عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما

‘Abd al-Raḥman b. al-Ḥasan al-Qādī – Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn – Ādam b. Abī Iyās – Waraqā – **Ibn Abī Najīḥ – Mujāhid** – Ibn ‘Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with them both.⁵⁶⁴

Al-Ḥākim states:

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.⁵⁶⁵

Imām al-Dhahabī concurs:

على شرط البخاري ومسلم

(*Ṣaḥīḥ*) upon the standard of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.⁵⁶⁶

Imām al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 H) has documented a similar chain:

⁵⁶² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *Musnad* (Cairo: Muasassat Qurṭubah) [annotator: Shu‘ayb al-Arnānūṭ], vol. 4, p. 242, # 18138

⁵⁶³ *Ibid*

⁵⁶⁴ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1411 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 2, p. 527, # 3802

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid*

حدثنا ابن أبي عمر حدثنا سفيان عن ابن أبي نجيح عن مجاهد عن أبي معمر عن
ابن مسعود

Ibn Abī ‘Umar – Sufyān – **Ibn Abī Najīh** – **Mujāhid** – Abī Ma’mar –
Ibn Mas’ūd⁵⁶⁷

Al-Tirmidhī says:

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*.⁵⁶⁸

‘Allāmah al-Albānī agrees too:

صحيح

*Ṣaḥīḥ*⁵⁶⁹

Imām Abū Ya’lā (d. 307 H) records as well:

حدثنا زهير أخبرنا يزيد بن هارون أخبرنا محمد بن إسحاق عن عبد الله بن أبي
نجيح عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس

Zuhayr – Yazīd b. Hārūn – Muḥammad b. Ishāq – ‘**Abd Allāh b. Abī
Najīh** – **Mujāhid** – **Ibn ‘Abbās**.⁵⁷⁰

Shaykh Dr. Asad comments:

إسناده صحيح

⁵⁶⁷ Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī) [annotator: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī], vol. 5, p. 303, # 3138

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid*

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid*

⁵⁷⁰ Abū Ya’lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muthannā al-Mawṣilī al-Tamīmī, *Musnad* (Damascus: Dār al-Māmūn li al-Turāth; 1st edition, 1404 H) [annotator: Dr. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad], vol. 5, p. 106, # 2718

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁵⁷¹

And finally, Imām Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 H) has documented this chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* too:

ثنا الفضل بن يعقوب الجرزي ثنا عبد الأعلى عن محمد عن عبد الله بن أبي نجيح
عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس

Al-Faḍl b. Ya’qūb al-Ḥirzī – ‘Abd al-A’lā – Muḥammad – ‘Abd Allāh
b. Abī Najīḥ – Mujāhid – Ibn ‘Abbās.⁵⁷²

Shaykh Dr. al-A’zamī states:

إسناده صحيح

Its chain is *ṣaḥīḥ*.⁵⁷³

At this point, it is needless to prove that Mujāhid, the last narrator of *Ḥadīth al-Ikhtiyār* – was also *thiqah* (trustworthy). However, we shall still do so, in case there is someone who prefers that. Al-Ḥāfiz says about him:

مجاهد بن جبر بفتح الجيم وسكون الموحدة أبو الحجاج الخزومي مولاهم المكي ثقة
إمام في التفسير وفي العلم

Mujāhid b. Jabr, Abū al-Ḥajjāj al-Makhzūmī, their freed slave, al-Makkī:
Thiqah (trustworthy), an Imām in *tafsīr* and in (religious)
knowledge.⁵⁷⁴

With this, it becomes absolutely proven that *Ḥadīth al-Ikhtiyār* is *ṣaḥīḥ*. All its narrators are *thiqah* (trustworthy), and there is no disconnection whatsoever in the chain. The *ḥadīth* establishes that Allāh chose only Muḥammad and ‘Alī – in a special selection - out of all the people of the

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid*

⁵⁷² Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzaymah al-Salamī al-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī; 1390 H) [annotators: Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and Dr. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A’zamī], vol. 4, p. 286, # 2897

⁵⁷³ *Ibid*

⁵⁷⁴ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Taḥdhīb* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; 2nd edition, 1415 H) [annotator: Muṣṭafā ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā], vol. 2, p. 159, # 6501

earth. It is clear from the text that Allāh had not chosen anyone else among them before He chose the two. As such, whatever other selections were made by Him, apparently, came *after* this first, unique selection.

The Qur’ān makes it absolutely clear that creation and choosing are *exclusive* divine functions:

وربك يخلق ما يشاء ويختار ما كان لهم الخيرة

And your Lord creates whatever He wills, **and He chooses**. They have no right to choose.⁵⁷⁵

Among those He chose was His Messenger, Mūsā:

وأنا اخترتك فاستمع لما يوحى

And I have chosen you. So listen to that which is inspired to you.⁵⁷⁶

He equally chose the Israelites:

ولقد اخترناهم على علم على العالمين

And We had knowingly **chosen them above the worlds**.⁵⁷⁷

The chosen ones, of course, are also the best:

ولهم عندنا لمن المصطفين الأخيار

And with Us, they are verily from **the chosen ones, the best**.⁵⁷⁸

So, when Allāh chose His Messenger and Amīr al-Mūminīn out of all the people of the earth, He was basically declaring them both as the best of all. Since Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān were alive at that time, it is obvious that both Muḥammad and ‘Alī were better than them, by Allāh’s Own Decree. These facts are *very* uncomfortable to mainstream Sunnī teachings, and pose an existential threat to Sunnī Islām as a whole. If the *khilāfah* of

⁵⁷⁵ Qur’ān 28:68

⁵⁷⁶ Qur’ān 20:13

⁵⁷⁷ Qur’ān 44:32

⁵⁷⁸ Qur’ān 38:47

Abū Bakr collapses, nothing else can survive from the Sunnī *madhhab*. This is why Sunnīs generally feel very uneasy about *Ḥadīth al-Ikbtīyār*. Perhaps, it is also why ‘Allāmah al-Albānī grades the authentic *ḥadīth* in this manner:

موضوع

Mawdu‘ (fabricated)⁵⁷⁹

Fabricated?! By who? By the *thiqab* (trustworthy) narrators?! Then, our ‘Allāmah states:

روي من حديث أبي هريرة، وعبد الله بن عباس، وأبي أيوب الأنصاري، وعلي الهلالي، ومعقل بن يسار.

It is narrated by Abū Hurayrah, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās, Abū Ayūb al-Anṣārī, ‘Alī al-Hilālī and Ma‘qil b. Yasār.⁵⁸⁰

Five Ṣaḥābah! That is enough to make it *mutawātir* by the standards of some Sunnī *muḥadithūn*! What exactly is the problem with our dear ‘Allāmah al-Albānī? The worst part of it all is that the ‘Allāmah – whether deliberately or by mistake – omits the *sanad* of al-Ma‘marī above in his extensive discussion against the authenticity of the *ḥadīth*! This, of course, makes it possible for him to reject it! However, if he had included that *ṣaḥīḥ* chain in his analysis, the story would have been far different. It is unclear how the ‘Allāmah misses that *sanad* of al-Ma‘marī, despite that he has quoted other chains of the same *ḥadīth* from the same *Mu‘jam al-Kabīr* of al-Ṭabarānī! In any case, ‘Allāmah al-Albānī’s verdict upon the *ḥadīth* is based upon incomplete research. As such, it is void.

Sadly, our ‘Allāmah takes things even more disturbing levels – to an all-time low - with this comment of his over a chain that has some common names with that of al-Ma‘marī:

ولو أنه ثبت عنه؛ لبقي فيه علة أخرى تقدر في صحته، وهي احتمال أن يكون هذا الحديث أيضاً مما أدخله ابن أخي معمر في كتب معمر؛ فإنه كان رافضياً

⁵⁷⁹ Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥajj Nūḥ al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍa‘īfah wa al-Mawdu‘ah wa Atharibah al-Sayyiah fī al-Ummah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Ma‘ārif; 1st edition, 1412 H), vol. 10, p. 530, # 4898

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid*

Even if it is established from him (i.e. ‘Abd al-Razzāq), there is still another defect in it which discredits its authenticity. It is the *possibility* that this *ḥadīth* too is one of those things which the nephew of Ma’mar inserted into the books of Ma’mar, for he (that nephew) was a Rāfiḍī.⁵⁸¹

Possibility?! Mere conjecture? So, there is no concrete evidence? But even then, no such possibility *ever* exists, to begin with! We will simply round off this chapter with this angry reply of the Sunnī *ḥadīth* master, ‘Allāmah al-Maghribī:

قلت :هذا كلام باطل جدا ، وبيان ذلك : أن ابن أخي معمر، شخص وهمي لا وجود له ، ولا يعرف أخ لمعمر . وكيف يوجد ابن بدون أب غير عيسى عليه السلام ؟

I say: This is complete nonsense! The reason for this is: **That nephew of Ma’mar was only an imaginary figure. He never existed!** Ma’mar was not known to have any brother. How could a son exist without a father, apart from ‘Īsā, peace be upon him?⁵⁸²

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid*, vol. 10, p. 533, # 4898

⁵⁸² Abū al-Faḍl ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ṣiddīq al-Maghribī, *al-Qawl al-Muqni’ fī Radd ‘alā al-Albānī al-Mubtadi’*, p. 8

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